

A MAID OF SONORA



BY CHARLES E. HAAS

California setting





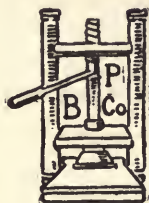


FELICITA.

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A MAID OF SONORA

BY
CHARLES E. HAAS



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
"En Mejico"	I
CHAPTER II.	
Felicita	8
CHAPTER III.	
El Desdichado	12
CHAPTER IV.	
Un Viaje	27
CHAPTER V.	
La Niñita.....	38
CHAPTER VI.	
La Madre	51
CHAPTER VII.	
El Discípulo	59
CHAPTER VIII.	
El Adelantada	67
CHAPTER IX.	
Una Culpa	81
CHAPTER X.	
El Corazon	84
CHAPTER XI.	
El Redentor	90

	PAGE
CHAPTER XII.	
La Querida	95
CHAPTER XIII.	
La Fortaleza	108
CHAPTER XIV.	
La Amiga	123
CHAPTER XV	
El Mensaje	128
CHAPTER XVI.	
La Tristeza	133
CHAPTER XVII.	
El Rendir	140
CHAPTER XVIII.	
La Novia	145
CHAPTER XIX.	
La Hacienda	151

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

Felicita,	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Hermocillo,	PAGE 5
The old Quadrangle, Stanford,	70

A MAID OF SONORA.

CHAPTER I.

"EN MEJICO."*

*"It is the season when the light of dreams
Around the year in golden glory lies."*

THERE are still a few men in the far-off state of Sonora who, on festal days, stand in small groups about the playing-houses of Hermosillo, lounge listlessly about the plaza, smoke cigarettes, exchange experiences and wager on their favorite horses. Many of these men are old; their once green cloaks, the universal badge of the regular Mexican war veteran, have long since faded into gray; their trousers or shoes, which in no manner, either in cut or style, pretend to the vanished glory of their cloaks, are much the worse for wear, but their various colored bandannas, wound about their necks in jealous pride, and their sombreros, or hats,

* In Mexico.

resplendent with trimmings of silver beads, show no mark of age. There are some few among them, very few, who were the proud followers of Santa Ana; men who fought against the Northern invaders like so many demons, but they are old now, old and feeble, and the fire has died out of their hearts, though it still glistens in their dark, black eyes, and often lurks in a dagger's blade, to be handed down to rising generations until the end of time. Among them, too, are men, some old, some still middle-aged, who unaided by government troops, time and time again have beaten back marauding Apaches and Yaquis.

Her fortunate neighbor of the north has long since settled for herself the momentous Indian question. There the red man as a hero has passed away. King Philip and Pontiac, Tansey, Big Crow and Natchez have left no braves behind them. The spirit of their bravery has passed to the great beyond, save as it lingers through mystical legends and vague histories. But Mexico must have patience. The inhabitants of Sonora and Sinaloa have yet to battle with the red man.

To-day the air is hushed and still. Scarcely a breath quivers in the fervid heat, as Hermocillo, resting in the heart of Sonora, is taking her usual siesta. The sun, who for ages has glanced relentlessly down upon the long adobes

of the Mexican pueblo, seems to renew his war face and seek out every nook and corner of the quaint old town. The long, white buildings glare back in hopeless defiance, but their inmates take no part in this vain resistance. The streets are motionless, saving where an occasional pepper tree drowsily waves its feathery leaves or drops a brilliant red berry upon the smooth, brown carpet beneath.

Slowly the sun sinks in the west. The deserted plaza awakens after a long nap. Here and there palms begin to nod and fountains to play. Little birds come out of their sleeping places to twitter and dance in the cooling air. Here and there, too, a bee buzzes about the flower beds as if in final pursuit of a sweet morsel.

The shadows are stealing further towards the north, and the cool breeze coming in from the ocean glides more playfully among the trees. The old town actually yawns, sleepily rubs her eyes and lazily awakens ere the day is done. The streets arouse from their inactivity, mantilla-draped forms begin to pass and repass one another, and gallant sombreros are silently touched in token of homage.

Hermocillo is once more awake. Men are flocking to the plaza. Outside the city, cattle and flocks of sheep are being driven onto the *patreros* and placed into their various corrals

of chapparal and thorn bush. The fondas and playing-houses are filling with loungers gathered together partly to pass a few social hours, partly to boast of their feats and powers, all anxious to share in the merrymaking of the night.

It is early evening, and to-day is the fifteenth of August. Vega, the famous old warrior of true Mexican type, has just thrown upon his bronco a saddle of many trappings, put on his great silver spurs, twice the size of a Mexican peseto, and is directing his course towards the town. It is remarked that his dress is a little out of the usual this evening. Clothed in all the splendor of his time and rank, he wears a new pair of buckskin trousers, laced at the shoe in Spanish fashion, and held in place by a wide, beautifully stitched, silver ornamented leather belt—an heirloom, as he boasts, of the original Garcia, the boon companion of Cortez. His green and yellow silk shirt, made for him by his faithful Doña in the days of their courtship, declares the taste of a Sinaloan. The pride of his heart is his sombrero, ornamented in gold and silver, which he wears with native grace. His vest is green, of a coarse broadcloth, with a double row of darker braid running down the front. Slightly thrown over his shoulders he wears this insignia of his former vocation—the short green cloak of a Mexican soldier.



HERMOCILLO.

Dusty and perspiring, the brave old general of many a combat, draws up his steed before the adobe mansion of the alcalde, the mayor of Hermocillo. He has ridden eight miles for this festal occasion, and he thanks his patron saint that the journey is ended.

Many of the guests have already arrived. The air is filled with the merry laughter of the señoritas, and the muffled tuning of guitars. There is to be a ball and a great barbecue, for is not the wedding of Don Feliz and Palladita, the most dearly beloved of all the country round, an occasion for the greatest festivity?

"Excepting your mercies," are the words of the general, as a few moments later he sits talking with an animated little group of admirers on the broad veranda, "there is no braver man in Mexico than our Don here. The Opates say the glance of his eye is deadly, Gondara has promised fabulous prices for his capture dead or alive. Tonari, the old rogue, lurks in his mountain stronghold advising his Yaquis to sign no treaty or truce with him, declaring that this youth of twenty-five is their angel of destruction; that all the Yaquis must die who come within his presence."

"Caramba! It is well for you," replied an Hidalgo, who had been attentively listening to the old man—"to boast of our host on his wedding day. To-morrow may dim his colors and leave him less a hero," and a stealthy, revenge-

ful smile crept over his dark, melancholy features. "Caramba!" and he turned from his audience.

"Señor," replied Vega, "the man who depreciates the honor and the valor of Señor Feliz Mendez, draws his sword on the Republic, and injures every loyal-hearted patriot, and I, Señor, for one, consider it a personal affront. Your words are those of a jealous lover, not of a fellow-in-arms. It speaks not well of either your loyalty to Mexico, or to the generous-heartedness of your forefathers. Be careful, Señor, lest you should have to answer for your rashness. The shadow that crosses the faces of your hearers broods no good will towards you," and the old man turned with impatient disdain from the chagrined Mexican as the bridal couple entered.

After the good priest's benediction, the merriment proceeded, and the conversation resumed its musical hum, as the soft cadence of the Southern tongue mingled with the sweet harmony of the music. Amid the joyous laughter and the festive merriment was heard the saucy breaking of the cascara, and the jetty black hair of the Mexican damsel soon sparkled with bright bits of colored tinsel and ornaments which the quaint globes or shells contained; and amid compliments and laughter the dance began.

When, weary with the dance, all were called

to a barbecue without, the alcalde was seen suddenly to turn to his daughter with the question, "Palladita, and why so pale?" but this inquiry brought forth only a smile from the lips of the maiden.

Someone's eyes had watched the groom incessantly as he moved among his guests. Someone's envy was aroused to fever heat, and every word of good will or praise that fell to his rival's share made the hatred in his heart the more bitter and the thirst for vengeance the more keen. Someone's jealousy was brooding and scheming the ruin of a fair young life, and there were whisperings that may have reached the ears of the Doña. "Did you notice as he spoke a word in the ear of the bride, and did you see how pale she looked as she shook her head? I fear that Manuel has no love for Don Feliz; let him beware. It is the old story of the rejected lover and his revenge. But why should the Hidalgo care? There are others as fair in Mexico who would love him."

CHAPTER II.

FELICITA.*

*" 'Tis always morning somewhere, and above
The awakening continents, from shore to
shore,
Somewhere the birds are singing, evermore."*

TO-MORROW will begin the Fiesta de Sonora—the three-day season of the Mardi Gras, preceding Lent—three days of processions, parades and balls, a carnival of roses and merry-making. Handsome floats, gay knights and fair ladies, gorgeously attired in mediæval costumes, will escort King Carnival to the Plaza de Armas to invest him with the keys of the city, that he may order his heralds to proclaim a season of unrestrained joy and hilarity. To-night there is to be a "serenata" and to-morrow a "Battle of Flowers" on the Alameda, with cascarones, confetti and candies. All Hermosillo is gay. At every turn may be heard the strains of "La Golondrina," the national air.

* The Little Happy One.

"Hidalgos" and "gentes de pueblo" alike make merry. It is a time for music and laughter and for the sound of wedding bells to be re-echoed from the rocky summit of El Cerro de la Campana.*

The Mexican world is again awakened to the joyousness of a winter season. The Castilian roses seem to cling more lovingly to the trellises over the broad veranda of their spacious home, the home of Don Feliz and Palladita. The fountain dances more playfully in their open courtyard. The sheep-bells seem to tinkle more sweetly among the flocks on the hacienda, and the love-light in Don Feliz's eyes shines brighter than ever—a little soul has opened its eyes in their cradle of happiness. A fair young mother gazes with worshipful blessing as Don Feliz raises a little wee urchin in his arms. "Felicita, you shall be my 'Little Happy One,' indeed."

The good Padre Mendez, the brother of the Don, immediately began to build up great hopes for his niece. Over the holy font he baptised her "Felicita," the Little Happy One, meditating as he did so, "If God spare you, you shall be my joy and the joy of my parish. When old age overtakes me you shall be my comfort. Yes, true, the bishop says I may soon be sent to a new parish in the north, but what of that?

* The Mountain of the Bell.

It will not be so very far away, and Don Feliz and Palladita will visit me and bring my Felicitá. Then when you grow up, you will sing in my church sometimes, and minister to the care of my parishioners. You will help me with my poor Indian charges, and will teach them to be Christians. Then God will reward you and we shall both be happy;" and for a time there were none happier in Mexico than the padre, the mother and the father of the little one.

Then the winds of the north once more brought rumors of Indian invasion. A call from the Government summoned Don Feliz to arms. He scarcely hesitated. After one long embrace he placed in the hands of Heaven and the good priest his beloved wife and daughter, and with words of cheer and encouragement, left them with a sad but brave heart to the safe keeping of the holy man, and rushed into the field to meet Pesquero and Morales against renegades and full bloods. What ensued is a bitter history of Indian and Mexican warfare, almost too cruel to relate here, yet an emancipation of bleeding Mexico; one more bond of Union under whose spell the Eagle and the Serpent may learn greater things than strife, feud and warfare.

Days glide tediously onward, fading into weeks, and weeks into months. Meanwhile, the good "padre" had been transferred to his

new parish in the north, the hacienda was placed in the hands of an overseer, and the mother and daughter retired for greater safety to the convent near Hermocillo. Then it was that Don Feliz returned to them and arranged for their welfare, and as he departed at the convent door, Palladita stooped, and raising the baby, placed it in his arms, and the tears came into both parents' eyes.

"No, I will not keep you, Feliz; a soldier's duty is the protection of his country. When you come back to us the little one and I will be waiting for you—if you do not come back, then—then you will be waiting for us, and God will call us to you." Little did he think how precious would be the memory of these moments in later years.

Led on by a brave commander, his troops fought with all the force of demons. They gained a victory at Arispe and Matopl, were checked at Noconi, and after a fearful struggle recaptured the important city of Hermocillo, and finally, after skirmish upon skirmish, Sonora and Sinaloa were once more at peace.

With anxious anticipation and hopes of peace and home and rest, Mendez saddled his spirited pony and rode speedily over the sage and cacti grown fields to the convent, to his wife and child whom he had not seen for many sorrow laden days.

CHAPTER III.

EL DESDICHADO.*

*"The sea of fortune doth not ever flow,
She draws her favors to the lowest ebb."*

AFTER a long ride Don Feliz Mendez and his companions arrived at the hacienda. A brief inspection and they again mounted and departed.

"Tired of waiting, José? We might as well be journeying onward, looking about the rancho. They didn't destroy as much as might have been expected. Oh, we'll soon have things looking quite different. You must come out when the señora is here. Hope we will have good rains this year, there is such great need of them. Hand me a light, will you, José? Thanks. One can ride easier while smoking. 'Bout two o'clock? I thought it was later. I guess we will get to the convent before night-fall."

"Yes, the horses will be able to find the way

* The Unfortunate One.

all right, Mendez. The Indians been meddling much?"

"No, not much that I can see," replied Mendez. "I had everything secured, however. Everything will be looking well by spring. Things just appear neglected. But I wonder what became of the shepherds. They ought to be round about here. However, we won't look for them to-night. I'm confident that all is well." They threw their horses into an easy gallop and swayed rhythmically along, chatting in a friendly manner.

At length they had crossed the rolling foothills, and passed into the more rugged cañons, coming, finally, to a place where the road abruptly forked.

"We are at the parting of the ways, compañero. Here one follows the right or the wrong. This trail to the right leads over a steep baranka (cliff), at the foot of which, however, a half-breed named Cabeza, 'Cabeza-Loca,* they call him, keeps a respectable fonda.† The left leads over the mesa, also to the convent, but it is longer, and has no stopping places. The choice, compañero, lies with you."

"I haven't been in these hills much, but let us find the 'Loco.' He may have news of the señora and the little one. These little inns usually know all that happens. The convent, they say, is safe, but there is no knowing what that

* Crazy-head.

† Inn.

robber, Cortiorque may, even now, be at. He is a sneaking coward. He never shows a feather at which one may fire a shot."

"Did you say Cortiorque? Manuel Cortiorque? Surely, this is the man to whom the 'Loco' owes his life, and what is more, I have heard him say at Ures, that he had sworn to avenge a wrong for this same Cortiorque in payment for it. Some love affair, no doubt. He speaks much over the red wine, this half-breed, but when sober he's as sullen as a dog."

As his companion spoke the old lines of dread again settled upon the temples of Don Feliz. When José ceased the Don did not break the silence. The atmosphere seemed suddenly to be filled with forebodings. The weirdness of it all oppressed José, and he looked up into Mendez's drawn, white face in awed expectancy.

Mendez pondered. To go on to the fonda, cognito, might endanger his life and that of his wife and child. To disclose his suspicion might lead to serious embarrassment. He must act quickly. The hazard, he knew, lies in the moment's decision.

"It is much further than I thought. How the afternoon passes! We must hasten. We have yet ten miles to ride, have we not? We will stop at the 'Loco's' for a moment's respite, and then ride on all the faster, but, José, none must know us; either our purpose or our

way. I will have a dispatch for the governor when you return, the safe delivery of which will pay you well;" and his looks meant much.

"Si, Señor, bueno," ("Yes, sir, good,") answered José.

They had proceeded some distance when they perceived at the foot of a declivitous hill, a well-tiled adobe, around which there was a thick hedge of native cacti, some six or eight feet high. Another hedge of the same plant enclosed a corral to the rear of the house, where a peon, a native of the working class, aided by the shepherd, or coyote dog, could be seen, driving a large herd of bleating sheep. In front of the house was a sort of a trellis-work frame of poles, over which were stretched innumerable strings of red peppers or chilies. One sees them throughout Mexico. The ground immediately surrounding the house was swept spotlessly clean, and in front of it were several bushes of those hardy, red Mexican roses, whose leaves, in Senora, are supposed to be a remedy for many ailments.

The two horsemen fixed their eyes upon a man who stood near the open side-door. It was Cabeza. Apparently he had just returned from a neighboring rancho. His horse still panted at the door. Yet there were no bags upon the horse's neck, nor even the customary traveling blanket.

"Que hay, Señores. Como estamos. What

is there new at Paralto?" And he bowed politely. "My house is at your disposal, Señores. Will you alight and enter? The road is long and dusty, and the good Virgin has provided. Shall it be mescal or wine, caballeros?"

A touching of sombreros, a light grasp of the hand, and they all entered the adobe together.

Within were some half-dozen men, mostly peons and half-breeds, smoking cigarettes and chatting around a table upon which were a number of glasses, evidently just emptied. A half-filled bottle of pulque stood beside them. As the three men entered the others looked up carelessly, and each one spoke a word of friendly welcome. The host passed on into another room to prepare some refreshments that were ordered. The conversation was resumed where it was broken off.

"Seen the Yaquis around lately?" inquired one young fellow, whom they addressed as Diego, and who had just entered. "Coming down the north trail, looked as if the whole tribe had been on horseback. Trail overrun with footprints. I fear more trouble. When Loco comes back we'll ask about them. I believe he has been north, across the border recently."

At this inquiry, Juan Moran, a big, surly half-breed, broke in, "Loco don't talk much, very friendly with the Indians. This morning I

came over to pass away the time, but he wasn't much company. Guess his old companion has been worrying him again. Seen anything of Cortiorque lately, Diego?"

At this Mendez relit his cigarette, which in his eagerness to listen he had allowed to go out, and although seemingly lost in thought, he grasped every word of the conversation.

"Saw him yesterday coming in this direction. Said he had some business with Cabeza about some sheep. I dare say so. Probably lambs. Such a business man that Manuel. Ha! Ha! How are things up your way, Juan? Indians troublesome?"

"No, haven't missed much. The mission people seem uneasy, though. Indians too free with things. I guess they are glad the convent is so near the chapel. They have some fugitives there, too. Padre Luis seems anxious about his charges. By the way, that Cortiorque is quite friendly there. I guess they trust him, too. Turned very devout lately, and quit drinking. Saw the Señora Palladita last week. You know of the Doña of Don Feliz? She looked rather thin, but cheerful. Expected the Don any day, she said. She was in the convent garden talking with some of the women of our rancho, but she doesn't go beyond the walls much. Seems to have a dread of something. Good woman, that, and very aristocratic."

As Loco was serving up savory dishes of

steaming tomares, enchiladas, tortillos and frijoles-and-carne for some of his guests, the Don and José rose to go, when suddenly the door was unceremoniously thrown open and three burly men burst into the room, calling out, "The mission wants aid, the padre has sent here for every man of you."

The men were all on their feet in an instant, their meal forgotten. Their faces were blanched with dread, and they feared to ask questions. Enough! The church must not be endangered.

Speedily snatching up their cloaks and sombreros, they rushed to the stables, flung themselves into their saddles and were soon riding in a quick gallop over the rugged trail to the convent, not knowing what had happened. On and on they rode. Quicker and quicker they plied their spurs, and faster and faster raced their horses, until the air was filled with their labored panting, and the muttered curses and prayers of the horsemen.

"Mother Mary, have mercy. Christus-Savior, Mother of Jesus, mercy, mercy," were the prayers of Don Feliz.

Swiftly the miles flew backward, until the white walls of the convent appeared, flooded in the silvery light of the rising moon. Nearer and nearer they pressed, until at last the mournful peal of the bells fell on their ears in spite of the noise of the horses' hoofs. Every peal

seemed to send bitter tidings of sorrow. Their curses were turned to prayers for the inmates. "Mary, Mary, Mother of Jesus, have mercy, have mercy."

Mendez had ridden almost in a trance. Each moment seemed hours. Each mile seemed a league. Benumbed with fear for his loved ones, the note of the bell fell on his ear like a funeral knell. The convent walls loomed up before him like a great white spectre. His every muscle was tense with anguish.

At the convent they leaped from their horses and rushed into the open door. Everything within was in a state of confusion. Some sisters, gathered about an object, no doubt a dying victim of the day's tragedy, were weeping and wringing their hands.

Mendez saw the bowed head of Padre Luis before the altar, and hastened to him. "For the love of the Father, Padre, the señorita, the little one?" he inquired, almost breathless.

The old man lifted his eyes in bitter anguish, attempting scarcely to look about him, and in a dazed monotone he murmured, "Gone, my son—may Christ have mercy," and his head again fell upon his breast in insupportable sorrow.

"Gone, father, gone?"

"Gone, the Indians——"

Mendez understood nothing more. The very earth was slipping away. The tapers

faded one by one. The sweet face of the Virgin before him took on a sad, sorrowfully pitying look, and then faded from his vision; line by line the lineaments of the Crucified Savior vanished, and his sad, enduring eyes closed at last.

"Gone, the Indians——." What a word of anguish in that thought! What victims of torture! "The Indians! and the worst of all of them, the Yaquis!"

When again his surroundings began all to come back to him, he found himself upon his knees before the altar, the old priest bending over him in muttered prayer, scarcely a word of which was audible. Only an occasional "Mercy, mercy," and the name of the Savior and His Sacred Mother.

While his strength was returning to him, in a faltering voice, which was now and then completely drowned by tears, the dear old padre told his sorrowing child, the sad story of the misfortune that had befallen them.

For weeks past Cortiorque had been a frequenter of the neighborhood, and sometimes visited the convent, bringing provisions and other necessities. Early that morning he had come, as usual; this time reporting some sickness to the sisters way down in the cañon, and giving a message requesting the presence of one of the sisters and Padre Luis. That morning there were fewer than usual at the convent,

several having gone the day before to Ures on some weighty religious duty. So while it seemed almost impossible for the padre to leave, yet he could not think of denying the request of a dying man, and then he had scarcely any fear of anything happening in his absence, since everything had been quiet for weeks, and there seemed no evidence whatever of danger.

Imagine his surprise, at arriving at his destination, to find most of the family absent on a visit, and the rest in the best of health. Immediately suspecting intrigue, he started homeward, filled with dread to think of what might happen during his absence.

At length his worst fears were realized. The frenzied sisters told of a band of Yaquis who had arrived immediately after his departure. With them were two men, who seemed to be their leaders. In spite of resistance, they gained admission, seized several of the women and children, and bound them to the saddles of their ponies. In the meantime, the Indians appropriated whatever took their fancy. The sisters heroically endeavored to save their charges, and preserve the sacred property of the church and convent, but all to no avail. Some of them were even cruelly injured in the attempt. Their masked leader at first tried to keep his band in check, but he soon became utterly unable to govern them. Then ensued great destruction, in the midst of which, all the men of the little

settlement about the convent, alarmed by the commotion, attempted to come to the rescue, but they were few in number, and their resistance was of little avail. They could regain none of the captives. The Indians had mounted their ponies, and with wild yells of triumph, galloped away over the hills to the north, bearing their captives with them. Since then the members of the little settlement had scarcely been able to collect their shattered nerves enough to administer to the needs of the sufferers about them.

As Mendez recovered his senses prayers mingled with curses passed through his feverish brain, but throughout he kept a dogged silence. As soon as he had regained his strength, he gathered together some two dozen men, all eager to go in pursuit. Quickly armed and mounted, they sped along to the northward. They rode many a weary mile, but saw no glimpse of the fugitives, yet here and there were evidences of their pillage and slaughter. At length they came upon the charred remains of a human being. Hope and horror! No, it could not be! Anguish is the foster-brother of sorrow. Now, Mendez scarcely dared hope ever to see his dear one again, yet he could not endure to think that these ashes were those of Palladita. There was no time now to make a diagnosis of them. They must be on, on after the Indians, in hope of—vengeance.

At length, weary with sorrow and fatigue, fearful of certain ambushment, his companions forced the frenzied man to return to the convent, where he was received with heartfelt sympathy. Sorrow! sorrow! sorrow! was it the will of the Creator? Is it essential, is it necessary to the great Plan of the Architect?

When all had departed, he stealthily returned to the altar in the chapel to pray, but prayers would not come. "A curse upon these fiends," he cried, "who have torn the very heart from out my breast! Curse upon this desert land that has promised me fruits and flowers in its mirage; that has lured me on by its flatteries, and then gave me to drink wormwood instead of wine. Oh, my Palladita! My Felicita! to think that perhaps you are still the slaves of these devils! Can there be a God that would permit such an outrage? Can there be a Satan so vile as to throw my loved ones into the hands of such demons? May the Virgin Mary have mercy upon them! May they be permitted to die rather than fall victims to these children of Beelzebub. Jesu Christo, can you not hear the prayers of a distressed father? Oh, hard, hard indeed, to ask for the death of my Palladita; yet she would wish it! If she could hear me she would say, 'Feliz, Feliz, you are kind; it is because you love me!'" San Pedro and San Pablo, have you not also suffered? Can you not pity a bereaved father and husband? Pray for

me, olī, saints! Pray that my Palladita might be brought back to me, pure and chaste, or pray that she may be taken to the angels of heaven rather than that she become the slaves of these merciless demons. Then pray that my Felicita might perish, too. Perish in her arms. The good Mother of Jesus have pity on them."

As Mendez arose he could see through an open door Padre Luis kneeling in the vestry before a little rude figure of the Virgin, praying, his face in tears. A tear found its way down his brown, wrinkled cheek, and fell upon the cross of the altar-cloth that the señora herself had lately presented to the good nuns of the convent. The kneeling priest did not hear the Don enter; he did not notice him until he felt the hand of Feliz resting upon his shoulders, and a voice whispering in the ear of the holy man, "It is the will of the saints;" without turning, he recognized the voice of the bereaved, and replied softly, "The saints are merciful, there is a voice from Heaven that tells me our Palladita is in the embrace of Our Holy Mother," and the two bowed before the image and prayed.

One expedition after another was undertaken to round in the mauraunders, but they all returned dissatisfied. Finally it was learned that Palladita and the child were no longer with them. Then pursuit was abandoned.

Mendez within these few months had become an old man, his head bowed with grief, and his heart was broken. Surrounded by the love of home, he had prospered and conquered; overcome in turn with sorrow and the want of love, the flourishing young stock withered, its leaves fell, its roots shriveled, and it was banished to the realm of "hope almost gone."

In the first days of his sorrow the Mexican element of his nature had contented itself in a bitter longing for revenge, but there had come a sad tale from Ures which made his vengeance needless.

One evening the guests of an old "fonda" (inn) were astonished at the arrival of Cortique, whom none had expected to see again.

He was haggard and worn with dissipation, and his dark eyes spoke fiercely of too much mescal, yet he walked up to the bar and drank more, and way into the night he was still drinking. Then he became talkative, even boisterous. He told of how he had sworn to avenge himself on Mendez, and glorified in the capture of the señora. Then he swore bitter, awful oaths at his ill luck, which, as he said, had snatched his prize from him just as revenge was within his grasp. He told of how the Doña had weakened, and frail with long anxiety and watching and riding, terrified and grief-stricken, had died of a broken heart in the first days of her capture. He laughed with a bitter,

vengeful laugh, as he told of how at least her grave was known only to himself. Later in the night he became more wild. It was the last raving before the stupor came over him. The wine and mescal had overpowered him. He began to mutter incoherently, finally sank into a sleep, and was carried to another room and was locked in, for it was the innkeeper's intention to hand him over to the authorities. Of this there was no need. He died in his delirium. His case came before a Higher Court for Judgment.

And so it became known to Don Feliz Mendez that the saints had heard his prayers, at least in part.

CHAPTER IV.

UN VIAJE.*

*"A good man was ther of religion,
And was a poure persoun of a toun;
But riche he was of holy thought and werk."*

A STRANGE rumor had come to the ears of Padre Benito, the mission priest of Magdalena. It was a rumor that the convent of Hermocillo had been stormed and that the Palladita and the child had been kidnapped by the Indians. Great, indeed, was the good man's grief when he heard of this, greater was it when a letter from his own brother had confirmed the statement. Down upon his knees he fell and prayed God that he might be the instrument of restoring to the saddened husband his beloved wife, to the grieving father his daughter. On his knees before the image of the Virgin he cried mournfully, "Holy Mary, thou who hast had thine own Beloved Son torn from thine eyes and the eyes of man, know thou the grief of a

* A Journey.

parent, and by thy supplications assist us, Oh! Mother of Jesus, in restoring to the faithful Feliz his Palladita, to the good father his child." Long and fervently he prayed at the altar that day.

Months and months passed, and there was no news from the many sources of inquiry of which he had bethought himself. His blighted hopes were reflected not only by his own grief, but by the grief of the parishioners as well, simple, impressionable people that they were. Then the months dragged into years and no news.

"Why does not the reverend father permit us and we will tear to pieces these wolves of the desert," the faithful would say, but the grief of Padre Benito was not the kind that found comfort in revenge.

"I know that God will some day help me to find them," he would answer.

His fallen hopes were now and again fanned by rumors that were vain. One day, Don Feliz, on his way to Chihuahua, visited his clerical brother at the Mission. The two men fell into one another's arms when they met, and it was a pitiable sight to see the priest and the soldier stand with tear-stained faces gazing into each other's eyes, each fearful of approaching the subject. The priest was the first to speak. "God will yet deliver them unto us, Feliz." A great lump rose in the soldier's throat, and

he only shook his head dolefully. His grief at the thought of his loss was too great, and he turned away his head. Two days after Padre Benito bade the Don farewell, with this request. "Pray to God, Feliz, they are in His keeping. He will never see them injured. *He* alone can deliver them to us."

Late one autumn, a small band of twenty Apache Indians were seen traveling northward with all their earthly belongings. They were nearing the Sonora village of Magdalena, and were said to be on their way to join others of their tribe about Ft. Grant in Arizona. Most of the men were attired simply in overalls and skin moccasins; their long black hair being left to fall carelessly over their bare shoulders. These men, with the exception of two, rode pinto-mustang ponies and held their rifles over their laps. Seven women trudged behind them, carrying large burdens of household goods upon their backs, held fast, like the baskets in which they bound their papooses, by bands that encircled brow and temple. They were likewise bareheaded and clad in most gaudy calico. In front of them these women drove three very lean horses, to which they had fastened, one on each side, long sycamore poles, held fast by straps of rawhide, passing about the chests and over the shoulders of the animals. These beams were again held together behind by thongs of leather. Upon such devised sleds, or

drags, were piled furs, bedding and food for the horses. Alongside of these beasts of burden ran the Indian children, eight in all. Some of the boys carried bows and arrows, and amused themselves shooting at the jack-rabbits that their lean coyote dogs scared up along the way. Among these children there was one girl child, much fairer than the rest, smaller of feature, and but for the tan of the sun, with complexion like the daughter of a Spanish grandee. The old squaw who had her in charge called her "Mananka," and seemed to favor the little urchin to the extent that she allowed her continually to crawl upon the drag and ride. At one time, as the clumsy vehicle bounced over some huge rocks, the child fell to the ground and received such a bruise that it made her cry. "Bah!" called out the old squaw, impatiently, in poor Spanish, "get up! get up! and quit thy bawling. Any one can tell that thou art not one of us. Thy people know not how to be brave. They are cowards, and thou are not unlike the rest of them. Get up, or I will pull thee up by thy white ear. Thou whining wild-kitten; I have half a mind to leave thee here to be devoured by the coyotes." But in spite of her scolding she raised the child, who choked her sobs, and gently placed her upon the drag again.

As they came within view of the house of the Rancho Paralto, the riders suddenly drew

their horses to a standstill upon the summit of a hill. It was a picture for an artist as they sat on their horses, silhouetted against the setting sun, their heads proudly thrown back, and gazing at a man on horseback at a great distance, who seemed to be riding from them at breakneck speed.

"He is from the Rancho, and he is going to inform some one at Magdalena that he has seen us, no doubt," spoke up Mescalero, their leader. "The white Governor has promised us safe conduct, and yet no one knows whether they will not come to kill us. Oh, how I hate these Mexicans, and their lying promises! I hate them worse than the poisonous snake that strikes at us, for him we may crush beneath our feet. I hate them," These last words he growled beneath a whisper, and he threw a look of scorn at the fair child on the drag, which melted slightly as he looked into her innocent eyes.

"No," answered a companion, "they will not dare kill us. We have the Governor's word. It is here on this paper," and he drew from his garment a letter. "The padre at Hermocillo told me as much, and the padre does not lie. But they will take the little pale one from us. I did not tell the padre of her, for fear he would demand the child. They may have found it out. They will search for her here. She must not stay at the camp to-night, and to-

morrow she must be brought to us after dark. She must not travel by day, for they will watch us."

With these words they all turned down the hill to a small cañon, where a clump of sycamore trees gave them shelter for the night, and a small brook gave them water.

Immediately the men unsaddled their horses and tethered them with long horsehair lariatos along the water's edge, where the grass grew in bunches. The women rested their papooses, bound tightly in their small wicker frames, against tree trunks, and immediately set about preparing camp.

They had just completed a meal of rabbit and tortillos when Mescalero addressed himself to one of his companions: "Thou wilt take the child, the white papoose, to the Rio Frio, Tinto, and await us under the baranka (cliff), where Pasco once hid when he escaped from Pesquiera. Your Majela will go with him. She will take some blankets and some flour for tortillos. You will await us there. We will be there to-morrow night when the moon comes up. You will allow no one to see you. If you speed you will reach there to-night at day-break. Be gone, Tinto, for there will be people here from Magdalena to claim her soon. Mananka, get thee gone with Tinto."

But Mananka, small as she was, demurred. "I will not go with Tinto. He will make me

walk, and I wish to ride on the drag. Besides, Pepe lets me shoot his bow and arrows. I do not want to go with Tinto," and she broke out in sobs.

"Then I will beat thee with a stick 'till thou dost go," threatened the wily old leader.

But he did not beat her. If she had been an Indian child he would have struck her, or rather it would not have been necessary to speak twice to one of his own people. Instead, he gave the infant a bright bead chain that he himself prized, and coaxed her until she went. There was some peculiar charm about the little five-year-old that won him over to her, he knew not what.

Very soon the clatter of horses' hoofs was heard in the cañon below. Immediately the men, who had been lying about the fire playing at monte, jumped to their feet and withdrew from the fire, taking their loaded rifles with them. The women, with their babes, hurried away and hid. Then almost out of hearing a voice called out:

"It is Padre Benito. He would speak with Mescalero."

"Let the good padre approach," came the answer. "He shall not be harmed."

The padre was held in high esteem by the Indians of Sonora, and he feared no danger to himself.

It was a goodly scene as the zealous priest stood full in the moonlight, bareheaded and robed in black like a saint, his large silver cross dangling before him. The attendants of the padre awaited his return in the distance. The wrinkled, brown old chief formed a striking spectacle as he stepped into the moonlight alone, open-handed, bare to the waist, save for a torn serape that was carelessly thrown over his shoulders, about which fell great folds of coarse black hair.

"Padre Benito bids you a fair night," came the salutation.

"And we bid the padre welcome," came the response.

Then the priest related his mission; that he had been informed by one of his parishioners that the Indians had with them a young girl of some five years of age, answering the description of his niece, Felicita. He told the old Apache with all the pathetic words and accent the whole story of her loss and capture. He offered for her restoration a large sum of money, and added that he himself would deliver to those who would restore her the benediction of his Holy Church and his priestly blessing.

The old chief heard him with bowed head. He no doubt pictured to himself a large heap of shining Mexican dollars. He had won the infant at a game of monte with a Yaqui chief.

Would not this be a splendid price for her? For one moment he was moved at the offer of a benediction. But this lasted only a moment. Then he said to himself: "No; when Pepe grows up to be a man he will be 'Capitan,' (chief) of my people. He will take my place. They are close playmates, Mananka and Pepe. She shall become his wife. She will grow to love Pepe. And when they are married I will tell her who her father is. He is a great Capitan among the Mexicans. He has great estates. Then she shall be sent to her father to plead for us. She will get for us lands and cattle and sheep, a large reservation in Mexico on which we may dwell, so that our people may not starve to death again when the dry years come. She will do this all for her love for Pepe, who will turn Christian for her. He will be Capitan of my tribe. No, I will not sell her. I will tell the good priest a lie."

Then looking into the eyes of the holy man he replied: "Padre, we Indians are poor. We are so poor that some days we have nothing to eat. Look at our horses, they are lean and old. The good padre has always been kind to us. We are hunted down by the American beyond the border like coyotes are hunted by the cowboy. From the Mexicans we are often made to hide in the mountains. But the good padre gives us alms and intercedes for us. The

poor Apache can do nothing for Padre Benito, whom he loves and respects. This is what makes Mescalero sad, that he cannot restore to the good padre his brother's child. But Mescalero cannot give him what he has not. Padre," he continued sadly, "there was such a child lately in Nachez' band. She died of the small-pox. They buried her in the mountains. Perhaps it was another. I know not. The capitan will give Padre Benito this promise; he will look for the child among the Indians, if perchance, she still lives. Mescalero will not forget the priest's kindness to himself and his people."

With a sad heart Padre Benito returned to his companions.

"The old rascal has lied to your reverence," said Juan Ruiz. "I saw the child with mine own eyes as I sat in the shade under the bridge he crossed."

"Saw her!" retorted a companion. "How dost thou know her, Juan? Thou hast never seen her before to know her."

"No, that I have not," replied the positive Juan, "but the good padre has often told me of her. This child was white. That I saw; quite white, and she was just about the age of his Felicita. I am sure it was the child. Padre, the old chief has lied to you, of that I am certain."

"Nay," replied the priest, "we will leave that

with the Shepherd. If the lamb is to be found He will find her and return her to the fold," and the words of the priest silenced them.

A few weeks later Mananka and Pepe were building sand houses and chasing grasshoppers on the desert of Arizona.

CHAPTER V.

LA NIÑITA.*

*"Take it to thy breast, though thorns its stem
invest,
Gather them with the rest."*

ANYONE at all acquainted with the life of General Lawton knows with what brevity and dispatch he was accustomed to give his orders. He was not a man of many words, this brave American soldier.

"To watch that cañon, sir, will call for a score of men, and every man awake. Mescalero, they say, has forgotten how to sleep. His medicine-man has given him some poisonous potion. We will have to furnish him with an antidote. He says he will not run, but I tell you, boys, he will, and the only way to make a man run is to run after him."

As the captain's words seemed directed to his young sergeant, he, in a manner waiving his customary discipline, even volunteered informa-

* The Girl Child.

tion. This so unmilitary an action had become the constant practice among these soldier associates of the Southwest frontier.

"The mesas will have to be patrolled, and an extra heavy guard placed over the wagons. These bucks are worse than coyotes; you never see them in the daytime, and at night the whole country is alive with them. I've heard them bet that they could steal your blankets and fry your bacon on your own camp-fire without awakening you."

This was said while the necessary preparations were being made for the night. The camp was still alive with dark, busy forms of the men as they arranged things, now and then chatting, and again resuming a customary whistle. Then tents were pitched on the side of a hill that looked out upon the broad mesa. It was one of the many desert fortifications which were but a momentary stand against the Apache, who had become mutinous, and had necessitated a little longer pursuit than usual.

Mess had just been completed, and as yet the western heavens were ruddy with the sunset.

Suddenly a Papago scout appeared with news for the captain.

"Mescalero come steal ponies. Pretty soon here. By and bye ponies all gone, Señor, no catch 'em, no shoot 'em Mescalero."

The captain was never slow in grasping a situation.

"Now, if there is a man among us who loves his flag, and I guess there is no love lost on these Indians!—See here! fifty picked men of Troop B through the gap to the west. Your men down the Arroyo, Jackson! and now, Doylan, take your boys 'long the western patrerío of Morales cañon until you come within hailing distance of Lee's men. Then do your best to drive the Indians to the south."

There was no lazy stretching of legs, and arms, no grumblings. The Saxon had learned from the Apache. A glimpse from the enemy meant spontaneous action.

In a moment all had been dispatched as noiselessly as the Athenians before Troy, and as quickly as the Boers in South Africa. These American-Indianized warriors and athletes of the sage and cacti knew the danger of delay. They had not attained the proficiency of their Apache instructors, but they did credit to their schooling, and have become almost as subtle and stealthy as their red brothers.

The desert sun had just passed behind the distant hillside yet the sense of his terrific glare still lingered everywhere. The heat of the stones and sand beneath the soldiers' feet was almost unbearable. Now and then light whiffs of air caught up little heaps of alkali dust and carried them in a slender whirlwind high into the sky, then all settled down again as still as before.

It is a weary matter to trudge and climb, until the great, dark shadows reaching from hill-top to hill-top announce the approach of ever-welcome night—the only relief from the dry, scorching, withering desert glow.

Two of the Papago scouts had just returned when the sudden “pang, pang” of musketry welcomed the dispatched soldiers into the midst of Mescalero’s band. Then what ensued is simply a reiteration of Indian warfare. An occasional exchange of shots, groans and curses, with the ultimate result to the Americans of three mounds that mark the burial of three brave soldiers; for the Apaches, one dead warrior, two dead squaws, one wounded brave, and captive child.

At length they returned to camp, and were again soon assembled with the scanty guard that had been left in charge of the wagons.

“Well, Wilson, what have you here?” were the captain’s words, as his eyes fell upon the little maid. “Were these the orders I gave you, sir? What do you mean by bringing us this charge?”

Before he ceased speaking a dozen lips were opened in eagerness to tell the story of which the soldiers had been the proud witnesses, yet they were all silenced by a wave of the captain’s hand, and his easy, “Don’t be hasty, boys, let him tell his own tale.”

And the sergeant easily defended his seeming disobedience.

"I took her in the name of humanity, captain. You yourself would not have done less. You know one never stops to think when such a moment comes. It must be done and then thought of. The child was in the midst of death, and I brought her here in the name of heaven. War's bad enough for a man. She was clutched in the arms of a dying squaw, and to save her from the trample of our horses' feet, some one had to rescue her at once. The bullets were heavy and thick. There was no time to hesitate, and I was near. I stooped and placed her on the saddle and started to ride on with the rest. Her father, who was hiding in the brush near by, rushed at me with his gun aimed to shoot. I turned on him and had almost sent a blow, when a bullet, probably aimed at me, pierced his left side. I have brought her here, yes, a charge, but I shall see she is cared for. No Christian could do less. There's no good comes of warring on children. Besides, I do not believe that she's Indian, sir, she's too light. Her type is Spanish."

As he finished speaking he stood the child, the wee bit of an urchin that she was, by his side, dropping her from his arms where he had been holding her since he had taken her from the saddle. As her feet touched the ground, she still clung tightly to his hand, convulsively, as

if with fear of his departure, and looked up at him with wild, beseeching eyes. Then, in answer to her mute appeal, Joel again took her in his arms.

"Well, Joel, we will care for her in some way," and the captain's heart was also filled with sympathy, and he admired his young friend none the less for his defence for a merciful action.

They turned to go to camp, when several soldiers, who had been sent to reconnoitre, came in hastily, bearing with them a wounded, bleeding Indian, who kept crying aloud for the captured child. It was old Mescalero himself.

"Mananka! Mananka! Nina mia. No—no, soy su padre, Señor. Su padre—el Don vive, vive en Hermocillo." ("Mananka! Mananka! my child. No, I am not your father—the Don lives, he lives in Hermocillo.") Wildly he gesticulated, he waved his hand frantically towards the southward. "Your father, Mananka." The great dark, deeply furrowed face was full of meaning. He strove again to speak, but the words were lost within his brain. His eyes spoke hopelessly. Again he threw all his energy into his voice, and with a throb, heartrending, said: "Mananka," and lay upon the sand a vanquished warrior. His soul had passed into the great beyond.

Death did not give him time to tell his tale.

Another word might have meant a world of difference to the child. It might have meant a return to Mexico; it might have meant convent walls, perhaps, too, a great hacienda or a governor's mansion; but it might also have meant to her years and years of toil in those wild and dismal deserts.

One by one the muscles of his strong face had smoothed themselves out, and all the strength of an infinite peace possessed his dusky countenance.

When they placed his blanket over the silent features each heart was filled with queer surmises as to the meaning of his antics. Here and there they chatted in little groups about it all.

"What do you think he meant to say, Wilson? He doubtless was very anxious about that little gal."

"Well, captain, I'm sure I can't say, but I wish he might have had time to finish. At first I thought he might be her dad in spite of her light features, but did you notice she did not want to go to him? She clung to me as if he was a stranger, and some way I don't know exactly why, but I still persist in believing that she isn't an Indian. There must be something in this. Do you know anything about this,—this—Don Feliz?"

"Well, no. Yes, perhaps—I've been over the border a bit in my day. Beamer there was

with me, he'll remember, too. One always hears much of this Don down in Hermosillo. You see he was one of those good-blooded Spanish fellows that the peons are always talking about. If it's the same one?—Then, too, you know he was a genuine soldier, and that adds a lot to a man's popularity down there. Let me see, I think he lost his family in the Indian wars. Seems as though they never quite knew how it happened. The Yaquis were mixed up with it some way. Did you ever hear the straight of that, Beamer?"

"Y-e-s, I've heard a good many yarns of that kind down in Mexico," replied Beamer, from where he lay, his six-foot-two stretched out on the sand, "but the one that hung together best was about a rival of the Don's stirring up the Yaquis and the other Indians until under his directions they captured the family, taking them out of the convent or some other place;" and then he added, reflectively, "but you can't tell how much of their stories are true, these peons."

"Well," resumed Duncan, "I've heard some such story, too, but anyway they were never found, and this rival hung himself and there was never any clew left. Seems as though this Don lived around there for a while, and everyone thought lots of him, but he kind o' couldn't stay, and after awhile he disappeared. They tell all sorts o' stories about that, too. Some say

he went to Spain, and some say he went to a place from whence he will never return—suicided out of grief for his wife and child. Anyway, no one has heard from him since he left, and the hacienda is deserted.”

“Did he have much property?” asked Joel, interested.

“O, yes, one of the wealthiest men of all that country once. Had a grant, I believe, acres and acres of land, mostly mesa, fine home. Duncan, there, has seen it, too. You know, Dunc. and I had the gold fever once and went to Mexico to mine silver as a remedy, and drifted into those parts. You’ve heard us talk about it—fine place that. Wouldn’t mind owning it yourself, eh, sergeant?”

“Wonder if he had any people around there?” spoke up the captain. “It seems as if he must have had—and was there much of a family?”

“Well,” replied Duncan, resting his chin in his hand as he half-reclined with his elbow on his knee, and pausing a moment in which Beamer almost strained himself to remember, but could not—“well, I don’t know, but I’ve heard something about a brother of his being a priest, but the fact is, I’ve never paid much attention to the matter. One hears so many tales in Mexico, you can’t remember all of them. Say, Beamer, do you remember about the priest?”

"No," responded Beamer, thoughtfully, "no, Duncan, can't say I do. Fact is, never heard of him—but about the family—well, I reckon it was just a small one. You see Mendez—Mendez, that was the Don's name—was just a young man; had married a daughter of one of the good old families down there. I reckon there was just his wife, and maybe a child or two."

"Well, I do wonder what the old Indian wanted," broke in Wilson. "I believe this little one is one of the Don's children. Well, I'll be blessed, if she ain't sound asleep. Never thought of it. Was so interested never thought to look. What shall we do with her, captain? Poor little kid, she is cuddled up here like a little kitten. I'll ask her to-morrow and find out what she knows about it all."

"Wilson, you make quite a nurse," laughed Beamer, teasingly. "But you needn't fear about her belonging to this Don; that is one of the old chief's schemes to save his child. Say, boys, Joel makes a fine nurse, doesn't he? Equal to a woman. Have to get you an apron and a white cap, Wilson."

"You shut up and come along and help me fix a place for her to sleep. You're jealous of me, that is all; that is what is the matter with you."

"That's right, Joel," put in the captain. "Never mind their taunting, my boy. Just get some blankets and make a bed here by the fire,

and to-morrow we will take her over to the Fort until we know what to do with her. Some of the women folks there will take care of her. She'll be snug enough here by the fire, and the guard can watch her. This is your night on, Wilson."

Almost before he had ceased speaking the little one rested on a bed of blankets, and a pillow rudely contrived out of a coat, and Joel threw his own blanket over her to keep her warm.

It seemed a short time to the lad as he stood on guard, for he really was only a lad, scarcely more than twenty. He watched every movement of the night, and many a time glanced towards the child, sleeping so quietly in the tent. She slept on, as only a child can sleep, closely guarded by the tender care of strangers.

"What shall we do with her if there is no one to claim her?" The thought came to him again and again, but he never deviated from his first decision. "I will keep her. I believe it was meant that I should do so, but, of course, we must try to find her parents first; they have the first claim. Yet I almost hope she may be left to me. Never did have a sister or brother; wouldn't it be jolly to have her at home. Wonder if mother would care; but then I would see to it that she didn't bother. That is the very thing, I'll write about it as soon as we get to quarters."

And so in his own mind he settled the matter very quickly, as a man generally does, putting aside the little details upon which a woman would put much stress.

He never once thought of all the long, long years in which, to an extent at least, she would be a hindrance; that would not have been true to his loving, impulsive nature. He never thought of the possibility of his having a home some day in which she might not be needed. He was only a merry, open-hearted boy, and he was ready to take her into his life as he might have done a forlorn little kitten, or a poor, wounded bird. There seemed no other way to do, and he cared for no other. It was a thought in accordance with the manner in which he had gone through the few years of his existence, cheerful and thought free, with a laughing face and a sunny heart, taking and giving happiness everywhere, and doing it all as a matter of course.

So as the night wore on and the stars began to fade away, and the sky began to roll all rosy in the east, he built castle and dream-towers for his new sister, and planned a wonderland for her, now and then even catching a glimpse of the far future, when she would be a grand lady, cultured, educated and beautiful.

He was still thinking when the first sunbeams called the camp to action, and the men began to go about their work.

"Well, Joel, tired of watching? better have a little rest."

"Oh, no, captain, we've had a lovely night; never heard a coyote."

"What did you say, Wilson?" asked one of the other guards, coming up, "never heard a coyote? Well, I guess you must have been a-dreaming. I heard enough of them to wake the dead."

CHAPTER VI.

LA MADRE.*

"We are governed by sympathy."

UPON their return to Fort Grant, Joel wrote a letter that ran as follows to his mother in San Francisco:

"MY DEAR MOTHER:—You doubtless will have received my telegram before this reaches you, and know that everything is quiet after the skirmish we have just had. I sent it as soon as possible that you need not worry—you are such an anxious little mother. I hope you are feeling cheerful and happy. I am to be with you in about a fortnight, and I shall be at home for some little time at least, and if no trouble arises to bring me back, my stay may be a long one. Won't that be jolly!

"And now I have a little surprise for you, mother. You never have refused me anything, and I can remember many and many a time

* The Mother.

when I was a little chap that mother had many, many things to forgive, and she was always dear and good about it. Well, it helps a fellow when he has a mother that he can always depend upon. 'What is it?' Well, mother, it's a girl! You know when we had the last fray with the Indians, I captured a papoose, and, mother, I want to keep her. Yes, I know you will say that a young fellow like I am, and a soldier, at that, who scarcely knows where he will rest his head on the morrow, hasn't much time to care for such a charge. That is what all my friends say. The boys all laughed at me at first, but they don't now. Mother, if you will take her, I'll see that you are not bothered. She is a cunning, wee bit of an urchin. Mrs. Haverhill is taking care of her for me just now. You know that is Captain Haverhill's wife. She has been very good to all us boys here. But the baby! No, you wouldn't call her much of a baby. I guess she is about seven or eight, or so, but she is so tiny! She doesn't seem to know a bit of English, but she speaks Spanish so prettily and knows Apache, too. A squaw had her when we got her, so everyone thinks she must be Indian, or part Indian, but I don't believe it, mother; she is very fair, so I believe she is Spanish, or Mexican, at least, but we will talk all about that when I get home. An Indian that we thought to be her father died in camp, but in his dying statement

he says her father was some Don in Mexico, and we took her to the dead squaw—the squaw was accidentally shot in the skirmish—the child did not recognize her, and when we asked her in Spanish if that was her mother, she only burst into tears and shook her head; later she said she did not know. Well, she was frightened. Perhaps some day she will recollect.

“I’m trying to teach her English, but I haven’t much time just now. She doesn’t seem a bit afraid of me, but will stand and watch me with her large, dreamy, dark eyes at whatever I am doing, and when I am finished, she says, ‘Señor, Señor,’ in such a soft tone of voice that I pick her up and we frolic about like two children. Then we have a lesson, and she always wanders into talking of buds and flowers and mountains, and then we forget all about the lesson. Sometimes she talks about the Indians, when suddenly she will seem to be dreaming a day-dream about them, but if I ask her about them she begins to whimper, and her little face loses its sunshine, so I stop. Mother, I think you will find a loving heart in that desert nymph. Now please don’t disappoint me, mother; I know you will not.

“Affectionately, JOEL.”

After he had addressed and posted the letter he felt very much relieved. The thought of it had bothered him very much. He knew that

his mother would either take greatly to the idea or be very much displeased with his boyish notion.

Several evenings later he started towards Captain Haverhill's, but before he reached the house, out flew a little midget, calling lustily: "Señor, Señor," and there was Mananka, breathless and smiling. She had just awakened from a nap, and her glossy black curls were falling over her shoulders in a topsy-turvy mass. Running up to him, she caught the young soldier with both her brown, chubby hands, and skipped along at his side, digging her bare toes in the sand at each gleeful hop, until they reached the door from which Mrs. Haverhill was watching them.

"Well, Joel, aren't you ready to give her up to me yet? I believe she is the merriest little elf I ever saw. This morning I was making some pastries, and she kept nosing around with those big, dark eyes wide open, and the first thing I knew she was getting a pan to practice pie-making. She is a regular mimic. So then she and I made a pie. Wouldn't you like to see it? I'll confess it's not a very beautiful specimen, but then, maybe, it will taste better than it looks. And it's the babe's first pie, you know, Joel."

"Poor, little, motherless creature," said Wilson, as he drew her pretty form up closely to him. "She was so terrified over there on the

mesa, she clung to anyone. I can almost feel the convulsive clasp of her little arms about my neck yet. No, no, Mrs. Haverhill, I will never give her up. It may seem strange to you, but it seems that she was given into my care, and I'll just keep her. I only hope mother will love her, too."

"Oh, I know she will," replied Mrs. Haverhill, "she can't help it. I never saw a creature creep into one's heart more quickly. Why, she has only been in camp a short time, and everyone loves her; but she is rather partial about her favors. Her dignity is rather droll. You know Mark Rainford? Well, he has been whit-tling her a doll at odd times, and yesterday noon he came over, all smiling, and offered it to her. It was so quaint; rather an ingenious affair. She was just enchanted with it. Her eyes fairly sparkled as she hugged it up close. I really thought she had found some one that she thought fully as much of as of you, Joel. Mark was delighted. He stayed around about half an hour playing with her until the bugle called him to mess; at that he picked her up, kissed her and turned to go. Well, I declare, you never saw such a change in your life. Those black' eyelashes fairly swept over her eyes, and she looked at him with such a look of disdain. I couldn't have kept from laughing if I hadn't feared a share of that glance myself. She looked at

the doll rather mournfully, but resolutely handed it back to Mark, and though he left it on the table, and hasn't since touched it, yet she won't play with it. Poor Mark, I really felt sorry for him. She put me in mind of some grown-up children I have seen before now.

"There goes the bugle, and you haven't had any of that wonderful pie. Come over after dinner if you aren't busy, Joel." And he hurried away, leaving a merry little figure at the door calling him a fond "Adios."

One day the reply to his letter came, and it read:

"MY BELOVED SON:—All of us were so worried to hear of the recent Indian outbreak, and so your message and letter fell like a balm on a mother's wounded heart. What would she do if anything happened to her boy! I'm so glad that you are coming home, dear. The old house is lonely without your good-natured laugh. Louise often inquires in her childish way, 'When's Joel coming back?' All of your friends are delighted to know you are coming.

"I hope you haven't been reckless or thoughtless, dear. But bring the little one home with you. We will see what we can do for her. Perhaps mother needs a little girl to keep the house cheery, now that you are gone so much.

Mother awaits son with an anxious heart, so don't delay, Joel. You must be here soon.

“Lovingly, MOTHER.”

“Dear old mother,” thought Joel, “you are as good as gold, never a cross word. Yet I know you are skeptical and will await our coming before you will thoroughly believe what I say,” and Wilson folded up the letter carefully and put it in his pocket.

Joel went to Mrs. Haverhill at his earliest convenience, and together they made plans for his departure, while Felicita—how Mananka came to be so rechristened no one knew—sat as quiet as a little mouse looking into their faces with a wise air of knowledge, as they talked about the things that interested them. She had learned a great many English words, and seemed happy to recognize one.

It was late when Wilson bade them all good-night and started away. The rising moon was scurrying through the heavens filled with fleecy clouds. The air was sharp and cool for Arizona, save for the occasional howl of a coyote or the hoot of a billy-owl. He unthinkingly walked away down the road in the moonlight. It seemed as if something very beautiful had come into his life. And as he walked along two faces were constantly before him; one that of a dirty, little, mischievous urchin with danc-

ing black eyes, enfolded in flowing coal-black hair, beside it was the sweet face of his mother, kind and benevolent, framed in soft white purity. They were the faces of two that he loved.

CHAPTER VII.

EL DISCÍPULO.*

*"And all about her neck and shoulders flew
A flock of little loves, and sports and joys,
With nimble wings of gold and purple hew."*

AFTER a short stay in San Francisco our little gypsy entered the Sisters' School in San Rafael. The world had been opening up to her like a great wonder-book, with picture pages of gorgeous scenery and gilded kings and queens. So unlike the Fort and Desert! almost too soon forgotten amid the dazzling revelations of her new life. The great city, with its Golden Gate Park, where she could ride donkeys and drive goats, fly about in the merry-go-round, see the birds and animals, hear the music and watch the crowd of gaily dressed people; the Cliff House where the ocean roars, and shiny, silvery seals lay about lazily sunning themselves; the water-front, with its wonderful ships; the theatres with their children's mat-

* The Pupil.

inées, the Chutes with its monkeys and wild beasts and funny performances, and all the city's noise and cars and wagons and immense buildings.

"Where do the people all come from, Uncle Joel?" She would ask him a thousand questions, sometimes in English, more often in her Apache-Spanish, calling him "Tio" (uncle) by way of respect; a custom prevalent among the Indians among whom she had lived.

The little, kind mother grew fonder of her each day. Groomed and dressed in all the habiliments of a Southern lass, she became an object of pride with her, fondled and caressed and kindly cared for.

"She shall be a little lady, like you, Lou. You shall go to the sisters' school together, and then to college, so that we can be proud of you both, and then you will grow up to be my daughters."

And so it came about one day, accompanied thither by the mother that loved them both, these two happy creatures, one our own Felicitá, the other her playmate, Louise Gordan, the only daughter of a rich widower of Wheeling, W.Va., entered upon their studies at Sacred Heart Convent, in San Rafael. The spacious building, with its gardens all enclosed by high hedge and fence, seemed at first dark and gloomy to the merry little midget just emerging from the midst of the city's gaiety, but a

kindly touch and word of the sister in charge, a genial smile from the old priest who visited the convent to conduct mass, constant encouragement from the mother superior, and happy playmate associates, soon gave it another tone. The nature of our little student was moulded to resemble the cheering, encouraging world about her, resplendent with the green hills smiling with the yellow poppy, majestically guarded by Mount Tamalpias, raising his proud head in the west, while on the east lay San Paolo Bay spread out in silvery sheen, alive with white-winged yachts and swift-sailing fishing smacks.

There human associations, too, that figured in her life, student associations that brought her happy hours, edifying and broadening her mind and expanding the scope of spiritual and mental vision.

Long walks through the shady poplar vistas in the environment of the convent, little picnics to Lichtenburg Cañon, or to Inspiration Point, and now and then a climb to the top of Tamalpias, or to Willow Camp or Tennessee Cove figured in the many enjoyments of her stay at Sacred Heart. They took her childish, fairy-spirit back sometimes in sorrow, sometimes in gladness to the brown sandy hills of Sonora and Arizona.

So these few years passed hurriedly in study and play, play and study, almost undisturbed by the progress of the world without. Her

school life was laid aside for the city when Saturday morning brought her to the dear little mother, who always came to meet her at the door. That was always a red-letter day for our demure, brown gypsy. Her day to have the trap and the bob-tail, to drive mother and Lou through the park if the day was clear, or to attend *matinée*, if it was not. It was her day to see the young lieutenants at parade, for Joel was stationed at the Presidio in San Francisco now. After drill they would often ride over to Fort Point to see the great guns that faced the sea, and watch the artillery. Then perhaps they would drive over to the Presidio Hospital, where Felicita's lithe form could be regularly seen among the sick. They were always glad to see her, and declared that she came to them as a messenger of health and freedom. There was the cemetery, too, that received from her regular visits; where her sympathetic heart expressed its feeling for the nation's patriotic dead, as she roamed through it with her beloved Joel.

Every young officer sought her acquaintance, child that she was. Each visit brought her mementoes of their esteem and their attention, as expressed in innumerable little *cúrios* and gifts, picked up in army life. But while her every visit brought her a shower of welcome, yet this magnetic little soul was entirely unpretentious.

The Presidio had an inexplicable attraction

for her. It, somehow, reminded her of Fort Grant, about which, in pre-civilized days, she had often rolled in the sand and dust as she played with her Indian playmates. But the Indians were not there, and the Indians, she would ponder, "were they not people, after all?" Again and again old soldiers told her stories of the Indian wars, while she listened attentively, and she would think of her earlier life that was all so hazy and so queer. They would tell her stories of the founding of San Francisco, of Friars Parlou and Cambon, and of the padres of Mission Dolores across the hills to the south. On her return home she would recount them, always leaving the little mother wondering how so small a head could hold all she knew, then the old lady, so proud of her charge, never failed to inform the lieutenant of Felicita's progress.

On one of these occasions a slight blush stole over the young man's face. He stooped over her, and taking her gray head between his broad hands, kissed her lovingly, saying as he did so, "Mother, you will be as proud of Mananka,"—he was fond of her Indian name—"as I am."

Unfortunate, proud mother! could he only have known how deeply this blush, this act, touched her heart, and disturbed the happiness of her whose life from his infancy had been lived wholly for her son. Had he known what

a truth that story, that blush, that kiss revealed to her!

Upon another occasion the young officer, absorbed in reading the news of the day, sat opposite the little miss, whose elbows rested upon the table, supporting with her two tanned hands a well-proportioned head, whose black, flowing hair, hanging loosely about her well-rounded shoulders, encased in glossy ebony a sunny, bright, brown face, from which two large, soulful eyes seemed to peer admiringly into her guardian's very heart.

"Well, Mananka, are you dreaming about the old woman that lived in the shoe?" remarked the lieutenant, not in the least disturbed.

"No, no, Tio José, I have been thinking about *you*. I have been thinking of how some day you would be a general, and then instead of sending you soldiers to kill Indians you would teach all my people how to live like white people, and I would be one to go and teach them, and you would order the soldiers to protect me. That is the way the soldiers and the padres did, Tio, in the old Spanish days in California."

She had the way of calling him "Tio José," when she meant to tease him.

"Little dreamer," replied the lieutenant, "*you* are not an Indian," and he continued reading.

After a moment she began again. "Joel," she

remarked, "you told me that your first night at home you would hear me read my story about the Presidio, and now you must let me read it to you. It's got a moral, too."

"Well, then, go on," replied the soldier, laying down his paper.

"Once upon a time, when grandmother was a child—— Yes, but not your grandmother," replied Felicita. "It might have been mine," and she read to him the well-known story of the founding of the western city of San Francisco.

As her interest increased, she thoughtlessly drove a sharp pencil through the page of her theme. "It all began with sixteen leather-armed soldiers—just to think. Ah! Joel, I've spoiled my paper, and it was all for you, you stupid!" she exclaimed, and our little enthusiast resumed her dreaming, while Joel lay back in his chair and laughed at her, for he had been watching the performance all the while. Then he straightened up and asked:

"Well, my little leather-coated Spanish trooper, where's the moral?"

"Oh, the moral, Uncle Joel, the moral is: if you don't be a great general, and I a good Samaritan missionary some day, the Indians in Arizona will all die like they did here long, long ago."

Their conversation ended here, but it endorsed the feeling in their hearts; her admira-

tion for the rising soldier, his growing esteem and affection for his captive ward, developing so rapidly under his care and protection.

Her years at school passed by like so many blossoms in a bee's flight, that buzzing and humming about a wild rose alights for a moment upon the delicate petals of a sweet brier in order to fill its tiny proboscis with honey, then taking wing, flies quickly to another and another, until, borne down with the sweetness it has gathered, returns to the hive from whence it has come, not to devour its store, but to deposit its treasure for the use and benefit and happiness of others. So with the maiden and her education, only in her case the honey-comb had not yet been filled. There were fields of flowers yet, fields of poppy and white sage, from which to gather her sweetness, there were yet many, many empty cells for this busy little bee, cells to be filled in her College life and in the life of the World Outside.

CHAPTER VIII.

EL ADELANTADA.*

*"There is she crowned with garlands of content,
There doth she manna eat, and nectar drink."*

SOME time after matriculation at Stanford, Felicity wrote to Mrs. Wilson:

"How different all seems now to me! The great sandstone quadrangle, with its long, restful arcades built in the old Mexican style, an architecture that I am so fond of, because it has something in common with Arizona, the spacious, cool class-rooms, the Arboritum so inviting at times, the long drives and walks about the campus, Encina and Roble halls, our dormitories, where the Stanford spirit is the strongest, a spirit that every Stanford man and woman will be proud of. Oh, mother, you do not know how I am already in love with my new alma mater. When I first left you and

* The Progress.

the convent, and Joel and all, I felt that I was being exiled from all that was near and dear to me, but what a truant to my former feelings I am! Here I am beginning to feel that the day that takes me from Stanford and from Roble will almost rob me of my soul. Some of the girls are speaking of organizing Sororities, and leaving the hall, but they cannot feel as we feel who have almost made Roble a part of our lives. What a dream-life college life is, anyway. But it is not all without seriousness, mother, you may be sure. You will believe me when I say that I have not studied as I do now, in all my life. There is so much to learn when one has an ambition. But it seems, mother, that I never had such an inspiration to work, and my studies are such a joy to me now. I'm afraid they were not always so at the convent. Just to think if all goes well, I am to be graduated as a 'Pioneer.'

"Just yesterday afternoon Lou and I took a ride on our wheels to the Stanford home. We met the Senator and Mrs. Stanford out among the trees. They invited us to take a cup of tea with them, and we spent a whole hour there chatting of our hopes and our plans. They listened so interestedly that we chatted like two magpies. What a refined and elegant gentleman the Senator is! He just seems to know 'worlds,' mother, yet his presence never embarrasses. Mrs. Stanford reminds me much

of you, in her quiet ways, mother. She seemed to take a great fancy to us, and invited us to come up and see her real often. I shall never forget her kindness and gentle manner."

Long before she had entered the University the question had been "where?" and as often the answer came "to your own people." This voice seemed to be calling her constantly, and she resolved to adopt such studies, which when once mastered would contribute to the welfare of the Indian people, from which, in spite of the protests of Joel, she believed she had sprung. If she could have the endowment of a broad, useful education, the support of strong friends, how much then could she do in educating and uplifting those poor, godless creatures, the victims alike of vice and disease, and the white man's avariciousness, from whose miserable lot she was so miraculously rescued. Besides, her studies would give her pleasure when among them, so unfathomably inferior to herself; her only solace would be her knowledge. Cicero had taught her long before how precious is the realm of acquired force and self-reliance that a liberal education alone can give when he said, "these studies feed youth, give pleasure to old age, are an ornament to us in prosperity, offer us a refuge and a solace in our adversity, delight us at home, do not impede us abroad, are our companions by night, travel with us and

retire with us to the country." Furthermore, would Joel not always be at her side, in thought, in heart? as she herself once told him: "Brother, you are always with me, encouraging me in my studies, rejoicing with me in my victories, both those over my lesser self and over my difficulties, kindly correcting me where I err, and praising me when I accomplish a difficult task."

Every evening the Freshman "Co-ed" could be seen treading the broad walk from Roble to the Quadrangle, and through the long arches, along the cool courts, where the red-tiled roofs reflected the splendor of the evening sun. And when she had received the letter that she went after—it was usually from mother or Joel,—she would often steal with it to a seat in the Arboritum, a place under a large oak, near the Mausoleum, and there read, undisturbed, "in maiden meditation fancy free;" and there, among the Druid trees, God's kind world seemed to speak with silent tongue words that the heart alone could hear and understand.

But the sky was not always rose and opal for her. There were times of forebodings and misgivings of the future, when the heart was sad; days of illness and overwork, when the captain—Joel was a captain now—seemed less sympathetic, and the reason could not be fathomed; days when mother seemed to be drifting further and further away. Then once there had



THE OLD QUADRANGLE, STANFORD.

come tidings, rumors in which Joel's good name and honesty were attacked. She well knew that he was fond of horses, that he had spent his leisure as a recreation at the races in Oakland and Ingleside. He had often told her, too, of sums that he had lost and won. But what of that? Was it not the favorite pastime of the young officers of the Presidio when not on duty to spend an afternoon at the races, and was he not a Southern gentleman with the love of horses inborn? Felicita did not fear for Joel. She could not conceive that he could ever allow himself to be dragged into disgrace, and hence she gave little credence to the rumors.

But there were not many days like these in her life, for a heart like hers could not long be sad and discontented where there were friends and fellow workers and congenial pursuits; where so much mirth and good fellowship abounded. Nay, these were only experiences that broadened and made her sympathetic, that brought her nearer her fellowman and her God.

The four years of Felicita's university life passed not very unlike that of other students. There were days and days of hard work, of examinations and theses work, of research work and statistical compiling, but there were also many, many social affairs to break the monotony of it all; parties at Roble and dances at the Fraternity houses, "at homes" with the professors, and receptions to the fac-

ulty, student excursions into the beautiful recesses of the Santa Cruz range, trips to La Honda and to Woodland, concerts in the Old Chapel, football, baseball, tennis, field days, boating on Lagunita, and a variety of other amusements to break into lectures and "digging" and cramming for examinations. Visits from mother and Joel were frequent and often, and again young officers from the Presidio came to spend a holiday or a Sunday.

On one particular Thanksgiving Day the campus was alive with students flying the Cardinal; people from all about assembled in their gala dresses, gay in garb and light of heart. It was the fourth annual intercollegiate game in San Francisco. Students were assembled on the wide portico in front of Encina Hall discussing the coming event, vociferously cheering their heroes, and in concert the "rooters" of the day raised their voices in songs and yells for their alma mater, while they awaited the arrival of a special train to carry them to the city. When it arrived, gay in Cardinal bunting, it shrieked, as it never did before, the yell of the Stanford men. The people thronged into the car as the university band, some forty pieces, struck up "Hail, Stanford, Hail," the Stanford anthem. Until the train moved away, Stanford was aglow with enthusiasm. The clear blue sky, the warm rays of the bright sun,

the confident spirit of the students all seemed propitious omens of victory.

That morning, Felicita, her crimson ribbons floating in the soft breeze, stood with Louise Gordan patiently awaiting the train to start for San Francisco, where she could meet Joel and mother, when her meditations were disturbed.

"May I share this seat with you, Miss Wilson?"

It seemed the very opportunity for which David McVeigh had longed and prayed.

If there was one who held the especial esteem of the young lady it was David McVeigh. Thoroughly responsive, and of deep sensibilities, she seemed always to burst into his presence with the air of "you must succeed." Unfortunate lad! He did not understand the "why" of this. The future had bound him to a narrow past that had not yet been broken.

But Felicita understood. She anticipated his impulse by drawing him into a conversation concerning their futures.

"And when I am far away," she remarked, "far off among the cacti, the sage and the wild Indians of Arizona, I know of one who will think of me. David, we shall always be friends," then, after a moment's pause, "just friends, that is all."

"Friends," the word followed him to the city, to the game; the glad hurrahs of five thousand or more could not drown it in his heart,

the songs of the students could not drive it from his mind.

All that afternoon the two powerful football teams moved over the field, now in a heavy floundering manner, now in a quick, snappy game over the white-lined oval, first one side gaining an advantage, then another; at one time with a victory for the Blue and Gold, at another with success for the Cardinal. But David McVeigh did not see much of the game. He sat quietly meditating, gazing steadfastly at the University section opposite his own, where Felicita had said the captain had procured seats for himself and for her. Occasionally a player with an injury would be aided off the field, then an unusual silence fell over the multitude, but David McVeigh was little disturbed. At the end of the second half alone he evinced interest; then the victorious Cardinal was everywhere in evidence. Great signs bearing the figures 6-0 were raised over the heads of the surging multitude of Stanford students and sympathizers, who formed themselves into one compact mass about their successful team. Men were jumping over the bleachers, casting their caps in the air, and uttering earsplitting yells; hats, canes went up, horns blew, blew into space so the noise completely drowned the strains of the college bands. In a few minutes the crowd had organized itself into a procession, still yelling and jostling in a

most maddening manner. At the head of this organized serpentine orgy, Stanford football heroes were borne upon the shoulders of jubilant students. These were released at the gate to be borne triumphantly in a tally-ho throughout the city, to be followed by a zigzagging procession, a yelling and singing mass of students.

Near the east gate a number of young men, decorated in Blue and Gold, clustered together in their disparagement resolved to tear down a strip of red bunting that adorned the East bleachers. The moment they attempted to carry out their resolution, some of them rushed to the framework and began wildly tearing at the cloth, perfectly careless of the surging mass of Stanford sympathizers. However, David was awake to the insult of his college colors. In an instant he was past the bleachers and cleared the walls. An instant more and he had the foremost offender by the heels, and with one quick jerk cast him to the ground. Then a general mêlée ensued, in which blows were received and freely given. When a few minutes afterwards the crowd had been dispersed by peacemakers, David lay bleeding and unconscious, with a scalp wound inflicted by a blow an inch above the right temple. Felicita, from her place in the grand stand, watching the surging multitude, was the first to observe the mêlée. She saw David as he rushed forth before her to leap into the crowd below. It was then that

she tore away from the side of the captain and followed David into the crowd, but was thrust back by the surging mass.

When the injured man opened his eyes he saw a lithe, female form bending over him, applying cold water, and attempting, with a small lace handkerchief, to staunch the flow of blood. The captain, too, was there, and in his large-hearted, brotherly way, drove back the morbidly curious bystanders. He folded David in his brawny arms and carried him through the gate into a carriage, with orders to the driver to carry him to their home on Van Ness Avenue.

"Felicita," David ventured, as they were driving along, "can you ever forgive me? I couldn't stand to see them drag our colors in the dirt."

"There is nothing to be ashamed of, McVeigh," said Joel, kindly.

That night Felicita did not go to the theatre. She was not there to listen to the cheers for David McVeigh, for the "Co-ed"—and every Stanford man knew who was meant by "the Co-ed." She remained at home to contribute to the wants of a wounded, fevered friend.

Some days after Felicita and David were driving through the beautiful green hills that lay between the University campus and La Honda.

"Felicita," he ventured, "have you quite

made up your mind to spend your life among those cannibal Apaches? Just to think! What an odd girl you are! Perhaps you will forget it by the time you graduate. But that is not long now. Let me see—four months.”

“Quite made up my mind, David. But then you know, Dave, you are to be a mining engineer. Perhaps you will come to Arizona to discover the treasure mines that it is reported the brave Colorado and the early padres worked in the days of the conquest, and later hid from marauding Indians.

“What a nice little story for our ‘Sequoia,’ if, in my rambles about the desert, Dave, I could find some old, old Indian, O, a hundred years old, who would tell me where those mines are, because I had fed him or cared for him. Then I could show you where the treasures are, and we could work them together, and become immensely rich, have homes and lands to give the poor creatures who must now roam about as outlaws in the sandy deserts, living on what they can steal and beg, because no one has ever taught them how much better it would be for them to use their hands in honest work. David, I once dreamed that an old, old Indian woman told me a great secret. Some day I will tell you what she told me.”

“But I cannot understand,” continued David, “I cannot understand why you of all people, should want to go into the darkness, out of

light and life. You, Felicita, so young, so cultured, so ambitious and full of life, should want to bury yourself *there*. Can't you see what an injustice it would be to that dear little devoted mother? Can't you see the wrong in it? The wrong to—Joel?" he continued pleadingly, and a glance from her eye led him to remark, "I—I cannot think that you love—Joel Wilson—Felicita?"

"David," her voice trembled as she spoke. Had he also probed into her heart, or had he heard of the misfortune of the captain? The world seemed cruel to her for an instant, and in that cruelty there was something like a mockery of honor and justice. Oh, could he but know how she loved Joel! Could she but tell David! Tell the world as her heart told her. Could she but tell David that she believed in Joel's guiltlessness. "Mananka, I am innocent!"—these the captain's words, were audibly written upon her heart—and she knew them to be the truth.

She gazed at David in doubtful surprise, but she had misunderstood his meaning. Not jealousy prompted his remark. It was the soul that she had awakened in him that spoke. It spoke in tones of hope for her.

The silence that ensued was almost deadening to him. Finally, looking him square in the face, she began:

"David, David, I am going to Arizona after

my commencement is over; it will be best, best for you—and for me—and for the captain, too, David. And as you are my friend, I shall ask you to tell Dr. Jordan and Mrs. Wing—they have always been very kind to me—tell them why I have gone. Mother will know, and the captain, too. In the midst of this,” pointing to her surroundings, “a great voice seems to tell me never, never to forget who I am. I am going back to my people, David, to the Indians of the desert.”

Then the calm, fixed expression on her face changed to one of anguish, as she thought of the man she loved. In a moment she regained her self-possession, and she related to David, for the first time in her life to anyone, saving Lou Gordan—and Lou had been more a sister than a friend—all she had ever heard, and all she recollected of her childhood.

“And I have made up my mind,” she concluded, “yes, I feel it is the task God has fitted me for, to give my education and my heart and my life and my all to my people. That was what I was born for, David, and educated and suffered for, and, oh! it is no use—God has pointed the way, the only way. I must forget that I am a woman, David, forget everything but these poor creatures to whom He sends me. Heaven knows, these poor, grovelling beings are my brothers and my sisters, they are my flesh and blood. God has given me this charge.

I have no right to disobey. I will go, David."

It was all clear to him now. David had nothing to answer. The placid expression on her face told him of the comfort it gave to her to let him know all. His own silence assured her that her confession—for it was a confession even of her love for Joel—would remain as inviolably in his heart as it was in hers.

They drove on to where the hills opened into beautiful dale, enclosed in a deep wood of nodding sequoia and oak, where a myriad of poppies, forming great beds of yellow, reflecting gold, held up their proud heads to heaven as if in their silence they were singing a *Te Deum* in Holy Mass.

"How beautiful!" they both remarked, almost simultaneously, and David ventured:

"Felicita, I hope your whole life will be spent amid just such blossoms and just such beautiful surroundings."

CHAPTER IX.

UNA CULPA.*

*"These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worst assays proved thee my best of
love."*

MAJOR WILSON looked rather serious and thoughtful as he left the Presidio grounds that evening. The week had been a busy one at army headquarters, preparatory to transferring certain companies, temporarily stationed at San Francisco. When he had completed the usual routine work for the day, he felt a great weight removed from his shoulders.

But his mind was not at ease. The tranquillity of his military life had been broken into. His seriousness was not all due to overwork. For him there was a problem yet to solve. He could not emancipate himself from this thought.

Joel had been accustomed to taking his evening drive with his mother; sometimes with Fe-

* An Accusation,

licita, or occasionally with a brother officer, or Lou Gordan, but never alone. To-day the carriage drove away with only one occupant, Major Wilson. He did not even notice the salute of a young lieutenant of his acquaintance, so busily was he occupied in his thoughts. All he observed was that men and vehicles were coming and going, and such significant objects in the park as the Museum and the Music Stand and the Tea Garden. And he would not have noticed the latter had it not been for a happy picture that presented itself to him; the picture of a nut-brown lass standing on the rustic bridge waving to him as he passed. But Felicita was not alone, therefore, the carriage did not stop in deference to her friend. It continued to roll over miles of park and beach roads, and rattled over cobbled streets until it halted before one of the homes of Van Ness Avenue.

Felicita was at the door to meet him as he dismounted. He greeted her carelessly and passed on. For some reason she did not stop him to banter with him as usual, and as she had intended. She perceived that he was troubled.

A few moments later Felicita entered with the evening paper, without a word, her extended hand offered him the periodical, upon which great headlines, clearly exposed to view could be read:

“Embezzlement Disclosed.” For a moment

more her eyes fell upon the lines: "It is reported upon the best authority, that Major Joel Wilson, of Battalion —, stands accused of the felonious appropriation to his own use of large sums of money probably amounting into the thousands, from the treasury of the Grand Lodge of —, for which he has been acting in the capacity of secretary."

Felicita could read no further. Bursting into tears, she involuntarily threw her arms about the major's neck, sobbing as she did so:

"I do not believe it, Joel; I never, never will believe it. It is false. They are telling lies about you."

For a moment Joel did not answer. Then without the least emotion he stated:

"Yes, Mananka, it is false. Thank God, that you do not believe it is true. That is all that I feared, Mananka," and the big, brawny soldier bowed over her and kissed her.

CHAPTER X.

EL CORAZON.*

"O, Cupid, so thou pity me."

THERE is usually a coldness and distance about college-bred women that tags them wherever they go. There is usually an air of wisdom and prudish sophistication that causes them to seem unnatural, and too often unattractive. Our admiration for them increases, our esteem for them is not lessened, but they do not inflame our hearts or touch our chords of sympathy. It is possibly not that they are educated; it is because they imagine that their education must brandish all girlish fancies, suppress all impulse, deaden all signs of passion, in short, give them an air of completedness without the factor "man," give them a masculine rather than a womanly intellect, turn all their energies, their forces, their talents into channels governed by the head only. For them the heart must have no pulse, the mind no imagi-

* The Heart.

nation, the spirit no haven of love, unless they be first subjected to the governing spirit of self-sufficiency which too often is their battle cry.

Oh, where has flown the soul that once beat in this love red pulse, so airy, delicate and fearlessly careless in the days of childhood, so sweetly confiding gracefully loving and playfully fond in girlhood, so capable in impressions, yet in resistance strong? Has college remoulded her very nature, or has she become the mere product of tendency—a woman without the charm womanly? Is the original lost? Is she no more a Miranda, a Desdemona, a Perdita, a Juliet or an Imogen, or even a Portia?

Happily in this change Felicita lost none of her girlish charms, but rather enriched them and invested herself with those that may be procured from the terrace above which she was stepping. Through natural deference she had made few confidential friends, and while she was a general favorite, there was that subtle something about her that placed her a little apart from her comrades. Whenever they thought of it they attributed it to the story surrounding her adoption. She had never—however, reasoned about it, and yet she never overcame entirely the sensitiveness her peculiar situation forced upon her. To herself, amid all the grandeur of her surroundings, she was an Indian.

In all that pertained to refinement and cul-

ture Felicita was certainly well endowed. No shade of sin, no line that spoke of vanity could be traced upon those love-lighted features. Strife, disappointment, reverses, the rude life of her childhood, her strange encounters and almost irreparable loss of father, mother and childhood's companions, demanded no expression on her features saving an occasional, fleeting, questioning sadness. All was harmony within that soul, without consciousness of it and without effort. Her eyes, large, dark, well rounded dials, that peered from between a profusion of black hair, cheeks and cheek-bones Castilian, refined in outline, teeth well set and well framed, a nose rather Greek than Roman, somewhat narrow at the bridge, lips a trifle thin, yet curving in a jovial expression of a satisfied nature above a chin delicately rounded, determined, but not aggressive, her features blended in a harmonious whole all the noble virtues of a truly noble woman. There was that about her genial nature that bespoke a strong yet flexible intellect. There was nothing about her nature or her bearing to distract from that exalted charm that invested her from infancy. Her's was a soul of love.

Throughout the day a friend had visited Felicita and Louise. The day was one for recalling reminiscences, and the young woman's mind reverted to the earlier days of her life. Her years were full of change, and each change

had brought with it a wealth of feeling. There was first the garrison, then the convent, and then the college. First the soldier, then the Captain, then the Major; first the desert, then the village, then the city; first the guardian, then the friend and then—the lover? It seemed to her to have been the life of someone else, not her own. But there was another one in her life, a little, fond, gray-haired mother. The thought was the cause of struggling emotions with her. She had all her life placed gratitude above her personal wishes. Whatever her life was to be she had resolved to live it for the happiness of those who were more to her than herself. Joel's mother's fond hopes, confided to her in an atmosphere of trust, were sacred to her. It was a sacrifice that she must make of herself. Was there not a God that would console her? Was there not a Heaven that would compensate her loss? Was there not a mother's kiss that to her was Heaven's own reward? Would he not forgive her for his mother's sake? Oh, would he not forgive? And yet he must never know. It was a confidence that she may not abuse, and could not if she may. Was it not his mother's whole hope, whole ambition, that Joel should marry in the high walks that he was accustomed to tread?—yes, that he should marry Louise Gordan. Louise, who had ever been a boon companion, a sister to her. What was she, Felicita,

but an unclaimed Indian, and he, proud Major Joel Wilson, descended from one of the first families of Virginia. She felt ungrateful ever to have lived to be a stumbling-block to his happiness; to have come between mother and son, her mother and her brother, her mother and her loved one!

One by one such thoughts came to her, and growing bolder, they aroused in her deeper anxieties and fears. They were like children who had grown weary of play, and were demanding greater attention when, with one bound, as if in concert, they bore down upon her fevered brain in a burst of tears and throbs.

Within every heart there is a strength that we do not fathom in our afflictions. It is this hidden sense that saves us in moments of greatest disparagements. It is not reason. It is the innate consciousness of self-control and self-possession, called into play by inherent feeling, that we dare show each other only one side of our nature, namely, the strong side.

In a moment the tears were brushed away, in trust that time would change all. Perhaps after a while the Major and Louise would be in a home of their own. Then if she could not endure it—was she not going to return to the desert anyway? to her own people, her own wild, reckless, helpless people; to the desert where the lark and mocking-bird were free and happy, and she, Felicita, could be free and

happy with them. It was the hope of youth, it was the fondness of a girlish heart that was coming to her rescue. Before the sun had set she was her own merry self again. Her fears were banished, only perhaps to be swept back again by greater heart throbs. But these four lines dwelt in her memory :

*"Must we never, never stand,
Soul to soul and hand to hand?
Are the bonds eternal set,
That should keep us strangers yet?"*

CHAPTER XI.

EL REDENTOR.*

"In this world it is not what we take up, but what we give up that makes us rich."

JUST what occurred behind the barred doors of the Grand Lodge as it met that autumn, no one but the initiated may ever know. The agitation among its members at its opening, and their mysterious secretiveness at its close, and the immense interest evinced by all the Major's friends during its session indicated that his welfare was at stake.

As the Major returned home on the second day of its session he met Felicita driving up with her new trap and tandem from a jaunt in the park. The young officer approached her with a smile on his lips, and handed her an evening paper, saying as he did so:

"Mananka, did I not say you were right?" and Felicita read:

"The charge of embezzlement brought on

* The Redeemer.

the — day of — by the Grand Lodge of — was last night dismissed. After a careful scrutiny of the books of the Lodge, the Committee on Investigation brought in a report favorable to the accused, and his bondsmen were forthwith absolved. The mistake arose through the negligence of the Auditing Committee in the keeping of the accounts.” Then more in detail continued an explanation of how the mistake arose. When Felicita completed her hurried perusal of the article, the Major drew from his pocket a small leather case, from which he took a letter and handed it to Felicita. It read:

“MY DEAR MAJOR:—The service you have done me can never be repaid. God knows, since this matter was made public I have hardly slept or lived. My fear was not so much, believe me, for myself as for you, for your kindly mother, whom the blow of your disgrace would have killed, for your esteemed sister, and for your many friends, Major. Had your kindness not come to my rescue I believe your noble nature would have really sacrificed all than to have allowed me to bear the disgrace which I, not you, would have perpetrated. I can never forget how much I have indulged in your friendship in the past, and what a friend you were to me in my present need. Where you have obtained the money to save me from the

bars is not for me to ask, yet I regret that you should have had to make a sacrifice for one so unworthy.

"I only hope that the day may not be far off when I may, in some slight degree at least, be able to return so great a favor, and now, Major, I can only humbly beg that you accord me an audience soon, that I may better show my gratitude, and understand.

"Sincerely and fraternally,

"CHARLES McCHARLES."

Felicita looked at the Major in a manner that asked a hundred questions, and he answered her:

"It is a long story, Mananka. A story that I cannot tell you all about, and yet I have so often felt that you ought to know of it. But you shall not know all, for there is much that concerns my friend alone, Mananka, and I know you would never have me abuse his trust in me.

"You will remember the day that Dr. Cochran drove up here to take me out to Ingleside. That was long ago, when I first came to San Francisco, and mother protested against my driving out with him, for she said she did not like his looks. Well, that was the beginning of my troubles. You know I often went to the races after that, and one day I met McCharles there. Shortly after we met at lodge again,

and then we became close friends. We often met at the track; and both bet heavily at times; sometimes we would lose and sometimes win. After a while losing became chronic with McCharles, and then, as I was usually flush, I loaned him money. After a while I began to distrust him, not because he refused me once or twice when I was in need upon a pretence that I knew to be false, but because, without his knowledge, I entrapped him in deceptions of which I was the victim. One day he came to me for money, and I blankly refused. He said nothing. Shortly after that we were elected as officers of the Grand Lodge; I as treasurer, he as auditor. From time to time demands came to me from the auditor to pay out certain moneys, requisitions that I suspicioned to be falsified. I knew that he was spending large sums at the races, and losing, but that was not my affair. Then came the crash. I at first thought of saving myself, and you and mother. Then one evening I was returning from the Presidio on the car, just ahead of me I saw you in the trap. You were alone and could not manage the horses, that were frightened by a passing ambulance. Some one jumped from a passing carriage, caught the leader just as he was about to drag the trap over the sidewalk, leaped upon the seat, and drove the horses into a side street. Then my eyes followed him as he handed you the reins, tipped his hat to you,

and hastened back to rejoin his carriage. I saw who it was. It was Charles McCharles. That moment I thought to save him, for it was in my power, and so I have." And then after a moment's pause, "But, Mananka, you never told me of that escapade, and it might have cost you dear, and why didn't you, Mananka?"

"And why didn't you tell me that you saw me?" she answered, in a woman's way.

To this Joel could only reply:

"Well, well, Mananka, I always distrusted that man."

Felicita scarcely heard his answer. She was thinking of Joel, who had saved a forger from justice because of the love of that Joel for a poor little Indian maid; and they were both silent a long while.

CHAPTER XII.

LA QUERIDA.*

"Love is the life of the soul, it is the harmony of the Universe."

AND then came the night before commencement, in which life always seemed to be crowding tumultuously; one crested wind-driven wave upon another, tossed into a little sheltered bay, which, before, perhaps for years, had rippled along in playful murmurings, unheeding of the tides, coming and receding in well-beaten paths.

The thought came to her that she must soon leave these surroundings, which she had so learned to love. She would perhaps that day take her last drive with old "Uncle John" through the Arboritum. She would perhaps take her last walk about the Quadrangle, that great enclosed Quadrangle of buff stone and red-tiled roof. The great oaks and the tall, nodding eucalypti would bid her good-bye, as

* The Beloved.

would her instructors and her friends that she had learned to esteem so highly. The shades of the Mausoleum, the bench in the oak near the cacti beds, the quiet alcoves of the library would miss their recluse, their habitant. She thought of the mornings she would arise, not to look upon the beautiful Santa Clara valley, which Bayard Taylor is pleased to class with the plains of Mexico and the Valley Damascus. She thought of the days when in the evening twilight she could no longer discern the Lick Observatory crowning Mount Hamilton, by the glint of the sun's reflection, when she could no longer look upon the picturesque Santa Cruz range to the southwest, wafting its long shadows eastward, when the bay, the bay three miles in the distance, would no longer appear to her vision like a vast, silvery sheen. And she thought of human associates, too. Of him whose large and warm heart has so indelibly stamped itself upon the character of the University he guides as president, whose calm and impassive exterior teaches us to admire and respect sincere simplicity and frank expression of all that is best in our natures; whose strong conviction of right and undaunted, brave determination to stand by what his convictions tell him is right, urges us to forego complying too hastily with public opinion, and to act according to the dictates of our consciences and our own best judgment. And

thought of her closer associates, to whom she owed the moulding of her character, and the broadening of her mental and spiritual horizon.

Thoughts like these occupied her mind as she sat seemingly attentive, the afternoon of her Commencement, to the orations of the occasion in the men's old gymnasium, near Encina, where the exercises were held in those primitive days. Such thoughts entered her mind as she stood under the '95 oak at its dedication, and as she mingled with the gay and happy at Mrs. Stanford's reception. They had a deeper significance to her than mere meditations, because they contrasted themselves with the heat, and the desert, and the wild, uncouth tribes of the Arizona mountains.

After all the pomp and display of all the numerous formal and informal affairs of Commencement week, Felicita and Louise anticipated a very pleasant affair in Felicita's informal "at home" to a small circle of intimate friends.

When that evening came, and the last flutter of feminine drapery swished over the stair landing, the Major, who was enjoying without the cool breeze that swept over the bay, entered and resumed a chat with his mother that his departure a few moments before had so ruthlessly broken off.

"It hardly seemed to me, mother, that I was

as young as they when we made such a sputter over that commencement of mine at the Military Academy."

"Yes, we scarcely realize, son, that the years roll by and leave us older. But then you seemed very young to me, Joel, only a boy, Joel, my lad. Do you know I have been thinking of your father all day to-day. Somehow even now when I look at your broad shoulders and realize your age, it seems as though my little boy has been lost in the passing years, but even then the little Virginia cadet was never more dear to me than my Joel of to-day."

"And, mother," responded the young man, "how is it with Mananka and Louise? Do you think that college life has changed them towards you, mother—or towards me?"

"Oh, dear me, no! but why, why Felicita should want to go and waste her culture and her sweetness upon those worthless Indians is more than I can comprehend, Joel. It has caused me many a sleepless night;" and then after a pause, "but I suppose it is natural. There will always be that longing in her nature." And the thin lips met in a half-rebuking line of earnestness.

"Now, mother," replied Joel, who had become thoroughly Western, "do not let that note of Southern pride creep in. I know that no one loves Mananka more than you do, mother. Has she been speaking of it lately, and so made

you speak of it now? She has never spoken of it to me. Isn't that odd?" and Joel Wilson gazed away into space musingly.

"That is just her way, Joel. She thinks more of it than you or I know; but I hope she will soon stop thinking of it and decide to remain with us at home. The old house would be lonely without her. She doesn't need to be planning for her future. If she ever does, her culture and her beauty will win her a lovely home some day. I am very content to have her always here with me, Joel. And how could Mananka ever think of leaving Louise? They have been such close companions for so many years," and turning towards him she continued, "Joel, my boy, there's the girl for you. Don't you think so? Her mother and I were close friends as girls. I can remember when her father came to court her mother. He was a Colonel then in the Southern army." And the kind old face looked into the younger one with a fond hope of seeing approval there, but she turned away disappointed, for the Major was not thinking of the banker's daughter.

A visit from the two young women interrupted their conversation, and left his mother's query unanswered.

As Joel turned his gaze met two figures, daintily dressed in white, giving the appearance of two zephyrs, such as one would read about in Moore's "Lalla Rookh."

He rose to go upstairs, and paused with one foot upon the first step, tantalizingly uttering an exaggerated sigh:

"Can a poor mortal be expected to remain heart whole before two such creatures?"

"You thought you would say something pretty so that you wouldn't be scolded for being so long about those flowers, didn't you?" retorted Louise.

"And I know someone who will have to present himself in a smoking jacket this evening if there isn't a change soon," added Felicità, with a look of teasing authority.

"Come, now, don't both of you scold," returned the Major, in a pretended crestfallen tone. "Here are the posies, girls, and I can show two thorn-pricked fingers. You ought to sympathize with me in my suffering. Are you going back upstairs to pin them on?"

"Of course," answered Lou, with a smile.

"I can get there first," replied the Major.

Whereat they all three, with a merry laugh, ran pell-mell like three children, and made such a hub-bub that Mrs. Wilson hobbled out of the room on her crutches, leaving her maid to follow in anticipated mirth.

"Children, children!" laughed Mrs. Wilson, in mock disapproval, "shall I send you to the nursery? There you are playing, and it is seven and after!"

"Oh, goodness," murmured Lou, with a lit-

tle gasp, as she relinquished her hold on Joel, and they both ran away laughing, while Joel stood breathless at the end of the stairs.

The evening was not an unusual one. There was bowing and nodding, and complimenting and merriment; there was music and refreshments, and toasting and story telling, cards, and fortune telling, and dancing.

In the midst of the mirth the Major brought in a gypsy fortune teller, procured at a nearby gypsy camp, and when finally the Major's fortune was told, someone listened more attentively than the rest. Someone's eyes would have reminded you of those of Palladita on the night of her wedding, someone turned pale, then flushed, and then sighed deeply.

After all the good-nights were said, and the guests departed, and the heavy door closed with a soft click, and the key was turned almost noiselessly in the lock, our brawny soldier stood with his hand resting on the shoulder of his loving mother.

"Tired, little mother? You have done well to keep so cheery to-night." And he turned towards her with an involuntary movement as to caress her; she was so small besides his broad, strong stature.

"Yes," she answered a trifle wearily. "I am tired, and it has grown late, Joel; but what a merry time it was, and I was so proud of our girls," and she stroked his head with her hand.

As Joel was helping her up the stairway, she stopped half way to call Felicita:

"Are you coming, too, Mananka?" Louise had already departed.

"Yes, mamie," answered the girl. "Good-night, guardie," to Joel, and she was already beside the little mother, who stood waiting for her.

"Are you going to need Mananka?" Joel asked, gently.

"Why, no," she answered, questioningly, as she paused on the next step to hear him further.

"If you are not too tired I would like to speak with you a moment, Mananka. I must be back early in the morning," he offered as a slight excuse.

"Oh, I'm not too tired, Joel," answered Felicita, wonderingly. "I'll come—good-night, mother, dear," and the kind old lady kissed her good-night.

"It seems as if some of them were here yet, Joel," laughed Felicita, as she picked up a withered pink rose from the floor, remembering having seen one of her girl friends coyly toss it to one of the young men of the party who had sought it, had missed it, and she was hurried away by the dancers, while the rose, soon forgotten, was trodden under heedless feet, until at last, marred and torn, it was left to wither on the deserted floor.

"Do you know, Mananka," he began, half heedless of his surroundings—how dearly he loved the name, "Mananka," that name of the dusty little child of the red-men, who had woven her silken-black Andalusian locks so closely about his heart that no earthly power could untwist the wavy coils; "Mananka," how the name seemed to be hers, and to bind within itself every thought and feeling of childish grace and sweetness. "Do you know," he reiterated, "if I was to be asked this minute who is the happier, you or I, I could scarcely grant you the honor."

"And, yet, perhaps I should still be wandering in the hot Arizona sands had you and your dear mother been less kind to me, Joel, less noble, less self-sacrificing."

For a moment they sat silently gazing into the dying embers.

"No," he retorted, "no sacrifice, Mananka."

"Yes, it was, Joel," she disputed, "yes, it was; and I am going to show my gratitude some day, when, when God wills that I can," and she tilted one slender, little slippered foot on the fender, demurely musing.

Joel gazed down upon her bright, dusky beauty which the fire-light and her snowy robe cast in such vivid contrast.

"And do you know, Mananka, when God *will* will that you can?" he added, as he took a seat on the arm of the chair beside her, and took her upturned face in his two broad hands;

"right now, by making this the happiest moment of my life."

She did not misinterpret his meaning. Her long lashes fluttered over her startled eyes, and her hands crushed the petals of the rose heedlessly that they held.

"Joel!"

Then two little tears made their way through two soulful eyes looking pleadingly into his. He knew then what a sacrifice his life had been for her. He knew better what a sacrifice the simple inflection of his own name meant for that trusting, white-haired mother who had given up her whole life to him, and to her, and he felt sad.

For a moment they were both silent, then Mananka began:

"Joel, I am going away. I am going far away to Arizona, to my own people, to show them how to live nobler and better lives. I know that you will forgive me, Joel. I know in time you will forgive me, and you will help me as you have always done. Yes, I came into your life as a poor, little, homeless, nameless waif, with not a visible tie connecting me with a single living human being. You became a brother to me, more, you became father, brother, sister, all in one. And Joel," she turned to him now and looked him square in the tear-stained face, "I have always thanked God that He makes men who are whole-souled and

strong like you are, and that He makes women with loyal and true hearts. He means that they should make homes that will perpetuate His love and His goodness, and yet, Joel, He does not wish either the one or the other to sacrifice all toward that home. Oh, Joel, there are women who have beauty and fame and wealth, women of quality, whose names and whose families would be an honor to you and to your true Southern blood, and whose love would honor any man. Joel, think. What am I that you should love *me*! Joel, Joel, it would only be a sacrifice,—a greater sacrifice,” and she threw out her hands imploringly, as if begging him to say no more.

“Sacrifice, Mananka? Is it sacrifice for a man to accept as a gift that which is dearest to him in all the world? Mananka, then the old home must lose its sunshine? No, I cannot live here then, not without your love, Mananka!”

“My love—not love you, Joel? Oh, heavens, I love you only too well—but you will forgive me, Joel,—you will forgive me—and you will think of mother,” and as she looked up at him, with a determined resoluteness in her eyes, he bent over her and quietly impressed a kiss as if she were a dear one passing out of his life. “Good-night, child,” he added, and yet he was conscious that there would be another time for him, somewhere in the vague, distant future,

when there should be no barrier between their loves. For the first time he understood. It was the noblest sacrifice, and he loved her now in a manner that he had never loved before.

There was little said that morning at the breakfast table. No song bird as usual flitting from quarter to quarter in merry laughter and jubilant song. No sunshine that beamed from a fair, benevolent face where it was used to shine in loving and life-giving kindness. A night of tears had banished that laughter. A night of sobs drowned the musical notes that were wont to come, but in all this sadness a firm, sweet look of determination took possession of those features; a determination that only three understood.

A few days after a great tear dropped from a soldier's eye as he signed his name to a letter addressed to a brother officer at Fort Grant. It was a letter asking that his ward might be admitted as a nurse to care for the sick at the garrison, and to administer to the Indians there. Then after a few days of weary waiting, in which Felicita's whole life seemed to be undergoing a change, a change so great that again and again both the Major and Mrs. Wilson attempted with vain pleading and reasoning to persuade her from her purpose, but her answer was always the same, "Mother, I must go,—I must, mother! It is all for the best! No, no, Joel!" Then came the looked-for tele-

gram welcoming her to a new life and a new duty.

That evening at Oakland-Mole two tear-wet cheeks were pressed one against the other; one old and white and wrinkled from which the Sun of Heaven had so long sent forth its beams in all kindness and refined benevolence of soul, the other cheery and young, bespeaking a heart of love and life of sympathy, and as the lips of these two touched each asked herself, "Why, why this parting?"

There were two battles for Mananka. There was but one for him. Yet his manly heart nearly broke as he helped her into the already moving car. He bent over her tear-stained face, kissed her good-by, and whispered:

"Mananka, somethings tells me I will be with you soon," and he leaped out of the car to rejoin his mother, as it rolled out of the yards of the Mole.

CHAPTER XIII.

LA FORTALEZA.*

"We pick our own sorrows out of the joys of other men, and from their sorrows likewise we derive our joys."

As the sun again arose to renew his battle with the arid earth, there began a new experience for Felicita in the Fort Grant reservation. She could scarcely believe that it was herself, here, in this desert waste.

As the stage rolled on from the station to the Fort she could catch a few faint glimpses of childish delight, of time when she stood in awe before the old padres. Faint, shadowy memories of her childhood flitted across her memory. "Had the beginning really been like this?" The hills looked quaint and bare against the cloudless sky except in patches where the sun-scorched earth and brush were heaped in lonely mass. Not a green thing appeared in sight, save far down the hill-rimmed

* The Garrison.

valley, where a thin, winding thread of willows marked the path of a weary little stream, that laboriously strove to carry its waters to the sea, but finally sank helplessly into the sand, almost untraceable, until the scanty rains of autumn gave it new strength to struggle. Here and there bunches of knot-grass and a few spears of salt-weed could be seen, grey with dust. Over this vast wound a white, rut-covered highway, over which a lone horseman rode. Doubtless he was one of the Reservation Indians coming for tobacco, or to lounge about the silent garrison.

As the rider plodded doggedly along he left behind a cloud of dust that arose, hiding the trees behind him. It surely seemed far more lonely now than in the days of her infancy.

As the stage rolled up before the office door, Mananka alighted without the least ado, drew the serape she had bought in Tucson closer about her shoulders, and stepped to the open door of the office, in which the Post quartermaster was standing, nodded, and addressed him:

"I am Miss Wilson, sir. Is Major Dupré in?"

She was shown into the office; a gentleman arose and addressed her:

"I am Major Dupré, madam."

She handed him a letter.

"I have been expecting you, Miss Wilson,"

the gallant young officer answered. "You are very welcome, indeed. We do not often have visitors here. And you have come to work among the Indians. Well, a hopeless and thankless task," and he turned and smiled as if to say "what folly," and added, "I will conduct you to your apartments."

Their path led them down a long hall, over a stairway, to a small, cheerless room, with bare walls, carpeted with old, worn blankets, and a jaguar skin for a rug. The emeublement of the room was in accord; a rude, wooden washstand and a table, a bench, two camp chairs, and a camp cot, with two red blankets to form a sofa. On one side there was a dresser of hard oak, and a large mirror, the dust still clung to it, newly purchased. A few days, however, brought about a transformation in that room; calico curtains screened the little windows, a bright spread was thrown over the table. It contained books and pictures, and a thousand little souvenirs and pretty trifles.

That evening Felicita met the ladies of the camp—few that they were—genial young women, but of a rather negative type, whose husbands thought for them, talked for them, and lived for them. However, they were tolerable, and if not an inspiring factor in the life of the good Samaritan, yet at least they did not stand in the way of her endeavors.

That night as Felicita repaired to her room,

turning from all the mysterious vagueness of the day, she seated herself in the plain little rocker, almost her only article of comfort, and closing her eyes, she wandered away to her girlhood home, and the loved ones there. She seemed to see those she loved sitting in the gaslight, which fell equally as soft on the dark hair as the silvery locks. After a while her eyes opened and she found all so silent and lonely. Then sinking upon her knees, and flinging her arms down upon the window sill, she buried her quivering face in her hands, and her figure shook with sobs of grief.

"Oh, it is so much harder than I dreamed," she moaned. "No one, no one, cares. Oh, why could I not have been born like he! Why could I not have been her daughter indeed! Oh, mother, dear, good mother, why could your little girl not stay and be your little girl always, and Joel—Joel——"

The sobs became pitiful, little audible pleadings that gradually exhausted themselves, and subsided with the faint tremblings of her bent shoulders. At last she became silent again, and raised her tear-stained face and looked at the silent scene before her with eyes fully open. Once more resolute, in reverence, she bowed her head, and with clasped hands, prayed to the God that had saved her from the thorns of the cacti, and the diseases and poverty of her In-

dian neighbors, and with that remorse vanished forever from her heart.

Before long she was a well-known visitor at all the Indian dwellings for miles and miles around. So, too, gradually, she became acquainted with the inmates of the Fort, and the poor wretches in the hovels about it.

Her first endeavors met with little encouragement at the garrison. The men, while always kind and obliging, looked upon her aspirations as a woman's whim, as an expression of eccentricity. When she reported to the army physician for duty his cynical smile as he gave her his instructions indicated his interest in the poor creatures under his charge. Upon speaking to an officer about her work she met with the reply :

"Yes, miss, there's a good many sick ones among the Indians, but the squaws are a surly lot, and I guess you won't get much thanks for your trouble. You'll come to think like the rest of us ; that these people are scarcely human. Surely God has forgotten them, they have lost every sense but greed."

"Well, sir, do you think one might help the children?" she replied. "Surely they would not resent that? If they are ill it seems to me someone ought to help them. Why, they might die in this terrible heat."

"Yes, they not only *might*, but they *do*, and sight better for them, too. What are they

good for, anyway? They just live to eat and to loaf and rob when they are young, and to be left to die, if the Fort does not take care of them when they are old. They don't care any more for one another than they do for their dogs. No, no, not nearly so much. And here are these poor soldiers, cooped up here to watch the worthless lot, living on nerve tension. And what do they get for it? A mighty poor existence, I can tell you, miss. But the situation reaches a climax when the young women, such as you, are sent here among them. It is hard enough for us rough men, God knows, this desert and heat. Yes, I know in a way we are to blame. The Government run 'em in here like we do sheep into a corral. But we had to do it to protect ourselves. No, that's no reason we shouldn't be human. Well, yes, if you insist upon it, I suppose it will do no harm for you to go and work among them in their filth and wretchedness. But don't expect any thanks," and he left her to send one of the women with her upon her first mission.

Together with two guards that were sent with them, they, Felicita and her companion, wound their way to a little one-room adobe, which, to one unaccustomed to Indian life, would hardly suggest a human habitation. The broken earthen walls were barely able to support the mat of tule-weed which served as a roof and this itself was broken into the last stage

of dilapidation. The wind had beaten against it for years, and it leaned feebly towards the northward, taking but meagre comfort in the further support of two poles which had long since staggered under the weight of its decrepitudes. The floor was of dirt. On the walls hung a few lithographs picked up, no doubt, about the Fort. In the door sat an old woman in a bewilderment of rags. Her hair was fantastically bound in a red bandanna. Her figure was huddled in a heap over a moist clay pot which she was busily ornamenting with weird blue reptiles, that bore somewhat of a resemblance to braids. About her were strewn some few jars, and to one side, within, were built up a few stones, where, cold days and nights, a fire was built whose smoke issued through a hole in the roof, when the wind, in its fury did not drive it back into the house. In one corner were piled up scraps of blankets and wearing apparel used as bedding.

The old hands kneaded the dark clay, which was no less grimy than they were, and occasionally altered the position of the cigarette tightly held between her wrinkled lips, and the smoke of which spasmodically hid the face above it.

As the two women approached, she grunted once or twice, but neither ceased her work nor looked up.

"Little girl heap sick?" asked Felicita.

"Uh, Uh!" grunted the old squaw.

"Oh, they cannot talk any English," remarked Mrs. Marshall, "and not much Spanish, either. Some of them understand a little, but, never mind, go on in, we will find the child lying about somewhere."

"Why, poor little creature!" said Felicita, as they entered and found the child lying on a heap of rags. "Her hands are burning hot. She will die in this dark, close room."

"Oh, no, she won't," offered her companion. "Apaches can stand lots of dirt. They do not know any difference, and it does not hurt them."

"Poor child," retorted her companion, "her eyes are as large as saucers. Her fever is very high."

And, Felicita, not heeding her companion, was all attention to the little heap of misery before her, so quick is a true heart to bleed with compassion for the suffering. As her hands busied themselves with the self-appointed task, Felicita's brain was buried within a flood of thought. Oh! to think that perhaps she was once like this! What if no one had ever cared to help *her*! How much she owed for all God's goodness to her! We never, never know of the awfulness of Indian degradation until we see it ourselves. Can there be anything more wretched? Can there be anything more de-

praved than these grimy, black-haired creatures of the desert?

While these thoughts occupied her mind, she tidied the little creature's coarse black hair, smoothed the hard bed, and put some cooling medicine between the parched lips. The child's black, mournful eyes continued to follow her every movement, with a startled wonderment, as if to say, "What does it all mean?"

So they traveled from hovel to hovel, contributing as they went; sometimes entering one-roomed adobes like the one just described, sometimes stopping at little brush shacks. The same dirty scenes were presented to them again and again. In some instances they were a trifle varied by the presence of the lords of the manors, who invariably sat about smoking in stolid heedlessness of their slaving womankind. In some instances there were sick children, and occasionally a feeble remnant of a past generation, but in most cases it was simply a repetition of ignorance and grime.

"Well, miss," said Mrs. Marshall, on their way to the Fort, "I suppose you see now what worthless creatures they are. Your toil is useless. You might return and not find a trace of to-day's work. It would all need to be done over again."

"Oh, but they are so helpless," replied Felicità. "Maybe after a while when they see how

much better it is for them they will be glad to follow the better way."

"No, they will not. No one can help them," came the answer, with a conviction which bitter experience had made beyond dispute.

A flash of pitiful sympathy passed over the young face, but the girl made no reply, and they walked on silently.

When Felicita went to her room that night she seated herself at the window and gazed out upon the starlit plain. How different it all seemed from what the morning lights had painted. The pale moon softened the ruggedness of the hills, covering them with a mellow radiance. What a wide, wide waste it was, and, oh, how much the young eyes saw to do, and how strong was the heart to meet the yearnings of her soul!

There are moments when our souls are so full that our thoughts are crowded into a mass of indistinguished chaos. So it was that night with Felicita. Her own life and its requirements were swallowed up, as it were, by this great universal problem, "humanity," which had conquered greater minds than hers.

From the very first Felicita applied herself with unfailing devotion to her task. Sometimes she would stay even into the nights, when it was necessary to be at the side of the sick; but never was she neglected by the soldiers and officers at the Fort, who soon learned to love

her, especially the sick and the comfortless; they were to her like the stricken, aged beggar, whose wrinkled, care-laden brow the pearly white hand of the kindly nun is not too sacred to stroke. They were indeed red men and red women, many of them criminals by nature and condemned by justice, and yet, to her at least, they had souls. Souls with responsive chords if one only knew where to find them. And so in a way her sacrifice was being recompensed.

"And how do you like your young mistress?" asked an officer of Marianella, Felicita's hand-maid, as he found her dreamingly basking in the sun on the veranda of the garrison.

"Very much, surely," she answered, in her soft, Mexican tongue, "but I fear that she is in love, Captain, and that her lover is in heaven," pointing up. "Sometimes she walks along for miles and she speaks not one word, wearily her eyes scan the desolate land, wearily they follow the paths and trails in their windings over the mesa below, wearily they watch the ravens as they fly overhead, clapping their wings and hovering with doleful cries over the solitary sycamore on the plain. Sometimes, I think there is something in her life like this tree, which does not call for me or you, Señor, nor for "la señora," your wife, but for some one who is not here to keep her company. Perhaps he is there," and she pointed up again to the blue sky.

That day Felicita had started early for a brush hut far out on the reservation, where she had gone to administer to a case of small-pox, a disease at that time very prevalent among the Indians about Fort Grant. While she was there an old, old squaw, huddled up upon a bunch of rags in one corner, who seemed to be endowed with greater intelligence than the rest, and claimed to be a Yaqui, one of Mexico's most advanced and proudest races, spoke to her of Sonora and Sinaloa, and the Indian wars and Mexican troubles, and in these incongruous ramblings over the past she spoke of a little Mexican girl, "muy pequeña," very small, that had once fallen into her hands, after a struggle that the Indians had with the whites near Hermosillo. Felicita came to be regarded as one of their own people by these cautious denizens of the desert, and they frequently spoke to her of their wanderings as they did also of their troubles.

"Mexican people steal our horses and children," the old woman stated, "and we can never trust to their promises. There was a Mexican a long time ago, but I cannot remember his name, who joined us, and told us that Captain Mendez had told his white men to kill all the children and the squaws of the Yaquis, and that the nuns at the convent in Hermosillo would call us to a barbecue of sheep and frijoles (beans), and that if we went we would

all be poisoned and die. Not long after that we were asked to come to the barbecue at the convent, but the day before one of our men who had been at the convent suddenly took sick and died. This angered everyone. The Mexican who was with us urged on our men. They fell upon the convent, killed many of these wicked people, and took away the wife and little daughter of this Mexican captain. Then the Mexican and Gandora, our leader, quarrel about the woman, and so my tribesmen drove the leader away. Gandora decided to send the woman back, because he had been told by the old men of the tribe that if anything happened to her a scourge would destroy all our people. But the first night she died. I do not know why. I think because she worried for the captain so. They gave the little girl to me. After a while I left them and came north with the Apaches. I brought the little girl with me, but Mescalero claimed her and took her away from me, and I never saw her again. Sometimes I look at you and think you look like that little girl, Señorita."

The story puzzled Felicita. Could the story be true? Could this Captain Mendez be her father? "Will the mystery some day be revealed to me," thought Felicita, as she sat at the cabin door looking over an infinitude of hopeless, changeless mesa, over fields and fields of hot, vibrating sand, with only an occasional

bush of greasewood, or mesquite. Away off in the distance she could see rough, frowning rocks in the mountains, and it seemed to her that they stood for all that was lonely and desolate in life. It seemed to her the picture of her own existence unfolding before her through the story of the old squaw, lone and dread and barren. This desert without a relief was to her like her future without him; the far-off mountain with unsupportable cliffs represented to her the obstacle that she could never surmount, her love for Joel. And as she turned away from both with a sigh, her eyes fell upon a cool valley between two hills almost sheltered from a careless observer, and from the hot sand beyond. It was a small valley, but as she looked longer her mental vision fashioned there a cool spring, and about that spring there were laughing flowers and green, shady trees, holding their heads gracefully up to heaven as if, arrayed in beautiful colors and reflected sunbeams, they offered their all to their Maker, and were praying to Him for further benedictions. This was her grateful soul returning to her as the fingers of memory's hand passed rapidly over the keys of time and played melodies at her heart's dictation, full of brightness and promise. "Might not the old woman's story help me to all this happiness," she thought, as she sat there, casting her eyes upon the land to the south, and then again to the sleeping boy within

to whose comfort she had just been contributing.

Presently in the distance she saw a soldier coming towards the cabin. When he arrived within a hundred yards of it he called to her. When she came to him he handed her a message, stating as an apology his orders not to approach nearer the infected dwelling. The note read:

“Miss Wilson, will you please return at once to the barracks, man seriously ill, and we need your help.

“(Signed), CAPT. MARSHALL.”

A few instructions to the old Indian woman, a tug at her horse's saddle girth, and Felicita rode galloping over the mesa land, back to the Fort at the side of the soldier, who had a story to tell her, and this story had much to do with her own life.

CHAPTER XIV.

LA AMIGA.*

*"Friendship is a plant that loves the sun,
thrives ill under clouds."*

ONCE, late that autumn, when Louise Gordan had returned from Santa Cruz, where she had been spending the summer months, she visited Mrs. Wilson, and naturally their conversation turned upon the absent one.

"Please do not think me very, very impertinent, Mrs. Wilson, but cannot I, too, know the real reason why Felicita went away? We were always just like sisters together, but she never would tell me what was on her heart. She must be very lonely. I know she always wished to do something for those poor Indian people, but surely there was another reason or she would never have left us, when we all loved her so much. Will you never tell me, Mrs. Wilson?"

A soft hand smoothed the hair of the girl's head, and a kind voice answered:

"I hardly know, child, I hardly know."

* The Friend.

"And you love her, I know you do," resumed Louise, "and you would not have let her go unless you thought it to be for the best. Do you know, one day, just before she went, I was over here—you know the day I came over for the lilies you wanted me to take to the hospital—and you told me that Felicita was upstairs. I ran up just as I used to. She was putting away all her old keepsakes, and there were tears in her eyes. She wouldn't tell me what the matter was. She said people cried sometimes when they were not really sad. But I knew that was not her case. I didn't say anything more. You know how Felicita was. You wouldn't dare ask her anything if she didn't want to be confidential. What do you think it was that made her unhappy, Mrs. Wilson?"

"How can I tell you, Louise," answered the old lady, kindly.

Louise looked up into the face above her. The smile upon it seemed almost a caress, but she thought only of the good Samaritan far away among strangers. She felt that she wanted to help her friend, because she loved her. She had known Mrs. Wilson so long that she had learned to read her thoughts at a glance.

Almost each day of the last few weeks previous to Felicita's departure, Louise had been with her friend. She could not avoid seeing the change that had overtaken her. Felicita's

kindness towards her adopted mother had been even more kind than ever, but the absence of that usual cheery joyfulness that was used to dwell in the eyes and the voice of Felicita was marked. Louise noticed, too, that the Major's face had become sober with a seriousness not entirely his own. And now as she looked up into the countenance of Mrs. Wilson she seemed to divine the reason of it all. It is a way woman has. She seemed to know why Felicita had gone. The ruddy hue came to her cheeks, and she arose.

"You need never tell me, for I know, Mrs. Wilson."

Louise seated herself quickly on the arm of the rocker, bent her face down and let it rest a moment on the soft, old cheek.

"Do you know?" interrogated Mrs. Wilson.

"Yes, I think I know," came the answer. "But I wish she had not wanted to go. It is so lonely with her gone, and Major away from home. But she seemed to feel that it was her duty, and perhaps it is well that she should do as she thought best. But I feel as if she ought to have stayed; after a while she might have had a home of her own here, and have been happy. Do you want me to tell you why she could not stay, Mrs. Wilson? Why, *I think* she could not stay?"

"Why are you so mysterious, Louise? Yes, tell me; but surely I know."

"Did you ever think of Major Joel marrying? Did you, Mrs. Wilson?"

It was an abrupt question, especially surprising as it came from the girl whom she had placed in so many air-castles of her son's possession, but the old lady answered readily:

"Of course, lassie, mothers always think of such things for their children. But why should we speak of that, Louise?"

"Because—because, for a long time I have been wanting to tell you something. And that something is this: the Major loves Felicita with his whole heart, and I know she would give her life for him, Mrs. Wilson, and I am sure you know that is just why she went away."

The old woman stopped her knitting, gazed motionless into the face of Louise, surprised at what seemed to her boldness on the part of the young woman.

"Child, child," she answered, "you have startled me very much. Joel and Mananka? No, no! That cannot be. Come into the house, Louise, it has grown chilly out here," and she spoke in a tone that demanded silence on a topic so vexing to her.

That night when all was quiet in her little room, Louise Gordan wrote the following letter to Joel:

"Major, I have long had something on my heart to tell you, and yet for the sake of that

dear little mother, whom we all love and respect, I have refrained, but for your sake, Major, I must say it. So I am to speak to you open-heartedly and frankly. Why should we bicker over words? Major, I have long wanted you to place your heart where it would be happiest. I know, as you know, where only that could be. The Easter tide of your life is at hand. The beautiful white lily that stands for the resurrection of your life still blooms in your heart with all the spiritual sweetness and purity of the past days. Then do not allow it ever to fade. For the friendship you bear me, even for the love you have for that mother who so often spoke of me as her daughter, much more for the love I bear *her* whom I know *you* love, cultivate, cherish this pure lily so that each day in your life may be made happier and you better by its fragrance and its purity and beauty. You must be worthy of her, Major; you must be hopeful. You could never give anyone you do not love all there is in your heart. No, Major, it would be pitifully droll to attempt it. Be kind to her and be kind to the little mother for my sake. I earnestly pray, Joel, that you may be blissfully happy some day with Felicita, in a house of which you are the pillar and the strength, and Felicita the blessing. May God keep you strong and brave.

“As ever,

LOUISE.”

CHAPTER XV.

EL MENSAJE.*

"Hope never spreads her golden wings but on unfathomable seas."

As they rode over the mesa the soldier, in an unconnected manner, related: "There is a young officer at the barracks just up from the Pass. He was trapped there with two others at Nugents, shot through the thigh by some renegades, or by the Indians from down there that Lieutenant Bullock routed after the raid at Nogales last week. He's not in much of a condition to talk, but he keeps inquiring after you, and so the captain thought he'd better send after you right off. He's pretty low, poor man, from the loss of blood. He was brought in by Corporal Beamer, one of Bullock's men of the 7th, and by a Mexican boy that came along with him from Tucson. They say that the major was sent to Nogales from Denver to look into the claims of the Mexican Custom

* The Message.

House keeper, and to confer with the authorities of Tucson, to look into the matter of Bullock's capturing thirty Indians south of there lately. Well, they say he was aching to come to the Fort here, and so at his first opportunity he started over, leaving Mescal this morning before sun up. He was warned not to come, as the Indians were not friendly, but I don't believe it was either a Yaqui or Moqui that shot him. I believe it was one of those Greasers from the Santa Teresa country, looking for horses. Whoever they were they put a pretty bad hole into his leg. If the boys had had a little more sense they would not have let him lose so much blood. He's more faint and feverish than hurt." And so they chatted as they rode over the plain, sometimes their horses were in a gallop, sometimes in a walk.

With her usual acuteness, Felicita soon began to understand the whole situation. Not long since she had received a short note from the Major, stating that he had been transferred to the Department of Colorado to act, for a time, in a clerical, rather than a military capacity, and that he purposed coming to the Fort at his earliest convenience. Then, too, the raid at Nogales had been much discussed at the Fort, so that she was conversant with every phase of it. An attack had been made on the Custom House at Nogales on both the Mexican and American sides by a mixed band of Yaqui and

Moqui, and a few white renegades from Santa Teresa. They failed in their purpose of plunder, but succeeded in doing considerable damage to the surrounding country, besides killing several persons. The Yaquis then started for Tucson, and Lieutenant Bullock, commanding Troop E, or the 7th U. S. Cavalry, was dispatched against them. A fight took place twenty miles south of the town, in which three of the Indians were killed and thirty taken prisoners. The report at Denver of this raid effected a dispatch of Major Wilson to the scene of action to adjust claims arising against the Government of the United States. Wilson was also sent to investigate in the capture of the thirty Indians and to arrange for their transportation to some available reservation. Upon his arrival at Tucson it was found that nothing further could be done until more complete instructions were received from headquarters, and the Mexican Government had authorized some one to act with Major Wilson. Meantime Joel, accepting the company of an old fellow-in-arms, whom he had met at Tucson, and a trusty, worthy Mexican boy, determined to avail himself of the interim by visiting Fort Grant and the little maiden, who for so many years had been his greatest care and his greatest blessing. He could not rest until the road could be covered that separated him from her.

The evening before his departure from Tuc-

son to the Fort, the Major had received a letter written him by Louise. Some indefinable influence caused the Major to start with joy as he completed reading the note. Coming as it did on that memorable eve, it seemed to be a prophecy to him. Would this sandy, cactus-grown desert again be his Eldorado as of yore? Would it be his Ultima Thule? Did his garden lie beyond this wind-blown vast?

Over and over in his mind he revolved the maybes and the ifs as he permitted his horse to walk leisurely through the passes, past formidable hills, steep and rocky in places, in places again sloping and studded with little scrubby, yellow pine and mesquite bush. He had been riding ahead of his comrades, alone and unsuspecting, when suddenly a shot rang from behind a clump of bushes from a higher place in the cañon and across the gulch; another shot and another, and before the Major could bring his revolver to aim he was struck in the thigh by a rifle ball. Beamer and the Mexican boy came up at once, upon the approach of whom, the offenders, no doubt expecting a greater number to follow, left their retreat and fled.

The best possible care was given the wounded man, but conditions were unfavorable, and the ride was trying in the extreme. Joel's fortitude held out bravely until within sight of the Fort, when his strength giving way, he fell into the arms of his two companions, and had to be

carried into the chamber of his old college mate, the commanding officer. There it was Felicita found him, still tossing in agonies of pain and delirium, crying out her name and calling for his mother.

That moment when Felicita crossed the threshold there were a thousand prayers in her heart, all pleading and calling to her God at once. A prayer of regret at ever leaving him, a prayer of woman's sympathy, a prayer that thanked God for this golden opportunity to meet Joel and to speak with him whom she loved, and to care for him and to nurse him back to health. Then came a prayer asking God's mercy, and reproaching herself for feeling joyful while he lay sick and unconscious before her. And there was another orison that went up to heaven with all the hope and fervor that can come from a sensitive heart that feels, and a deep soul that loves, a prayer that was said in the sacred sanctum of the soul's confessional, to be communicated to her God alone.

CHAPTER XVI.

LA TRISTEZA.*

"And his head is bowed with weight of years."

TIME passed. Each day became a weary, vain search. Even though at last he lost all hope, yet this seemed all that was left of life to Don Feliz Mendez. He had become a restless wanderer; homeless, wifeless, childless, he who shortly had all the happiness of a beautiful, joyous house.

He tried staying at his hacienda among the hills, the home around which every heartstring was woven, but each wall sent out to him a silent, sorrowful echo of old-time gladness, where once every room resounded with the merry voices of a wife singing, and a babe's prattle. In time the shadows deepened beneath his eyes. He could endure it no longer. One evening he revisited each cherished spot, and closed the last door with a solemn reverence. He had dis-

* "The Bereavement."

posed of all the chattels. He would forsake every object that made him sad. He would go out into the world.

Silently he went to the stable, mounted his horse and rode away into the darkness. On and on he rode, scarcely knowing whither, until after hours of riding he found himself descending the steep hill in front of Loco's tavern. Not a light shone. All was dark. He dismounted and knocked at the door. Only a hollow sound of emptiness came to him from within. The adobe was deserted. Another ligament connecting him with the past was severed. He looked down into the depths of the cañon, and there was only darkness for him. The trees, the great, rugged live oaks about him sobbed and quivered in seeming sympathy. No human sound broke the stillness of that loneliness, yet away through the shadow came the mournful note of the turtle dove, which echoed and re-echoed in his heart, and the sadness became the more unbearable as he likened that cry to the plaint of his Palladita for him as she bore the cruelty of her captors. The Don mounted his horse and rode slowly out of the cañon.

As he came upon the mesa again from the great shadow of the hills, the moon, just arisen, shone down in a calm, soft, radiant splendor. The eucalypti trees on the border of a rancho away to the westward threw their tall,

straight forms up against the horizon like so many sentinels of the night. The air was clear and cool, and sweet, and fanned his face like the airy caress of invisible fingers. And in all this gentle vastness the world seemed peopled by no one but his own sorrowing soul, which spread its wings further and further into the infinite void,—the void of no hope.

There are moments in a man's lifetime when the vastness of such solitude comes like the perfumed benediction of holy incense. It carries with it a longing, a mighty, surging, longing for peace. Every subtle link of human sympathy seems shattered into unredeemable fragments. Even God seems so vague, awe-inspiring, that He is unapproachable. There is then no longing for death; that is too weird, untangible and unsatisfactory; the longing is for peace. The vastness of silence alone is satisfying. The throbbing of a hundred hearts seem crowded in one frail breast, and the surging of myriads of thoughts rush through a weary brain.

Just such a soul-felt longing filled Don Mendez's heart as on and on he rode in that silvery moonlight night, when in this hopelessness the words of his brother, the priest, came to him: "There is a God in heaven who sees further into the future than unhappy man."

The adventures of the bereaved Don cannot be written on a page. Suffice then to follow

the winding path of the restless wanderer. After returning once more to his old homestead at Hermocillo, as above related, he betook himself to the city of Chihuahua, entered into the political agitation of the times, and led the spirit of the Mexican Liberals. At various times he was sent by his constituents to the National Congress in the City of Mexico, had supported Lerdo de Tajada, and had become the staunch friend of Porfirio Diaz, afterwards to play so eminent a part in the historical drama of the Republic. He had been several times entrusted with troops by the President. Once he had led them against the rebels in Chihuahua and Sonora, again he led a considerable force against the Yaqui Indians in the north. In all this time he never married. Then after an active life of many years given up, like the true patriot that he was, to the reorganization and unification of his country, he once more returned to the west, to Hermocillo, now bowed with age and care, to pass the declining years of his life in peace and comfort amid familiar scenes and kindly, friendly faces.

But rest was not for him. The too grateful people of Hermocillo, ever mindful of his youth and sacrifices, conscious of his strong, Liberal principles, called him to be their alcalde, their mayor; they appealed, when he objected on the ground that he was too old to serve the public, to his patriotism, and pointed

out to him the urgent needs of Hermosillo. He accepted. Years followed.

Old and bowed and gray, the sturdy Mexican sat one day at his broad desk, his brown, wrinkled face supported by a hand no less marked with age over which fell a few locks of white hair, slightly curled. Upon his shoulders, though the day was not cold, carelessly hung a great green cloak, such as the Mexican soldier wears when the day is chilly. With eyes half closed, and head bent, he had been perusing a document of State, carefully penned and gay with large, yellow seals and bits of ribbon, such as one constantly sees in Mexican courts. Little by little his eyes closed as he attempted to read, and little by little his head bent further towards his breast, until, semi-conscious that sleep was overtaking him, he would straighten in his chair, open wide his eyes, only to fall back in the same stupor, when reading made him drowsy. In this drowsiness the paper would vanish from him entirely, leaving on the canvas of his dream-mind the picture of the prosperous hacienda, of Palladita, and of a sweet little girl-child that he loved beyond conception.

Then came a rap at the door, that vanished his beautiful picture and quite startled him.

"Truly," thought Feliz, "truly, I am getting old—old and feeble. Enter! enter!" he replied, in a hollow voice, once so resonant, and

a youth approached him bearing a packet of mail.

"Well, indeed. It is a letter from my brother at Magdalena, the padre," grumbled the old man, as he looked over his mail and groped among papers, scattered on his desk, for a pair of glasses. "He has not written me these six months; not since I sent him money for that new chalice. He and his Indians and their pilgrimages! They will only kill him and rob him. If like me, he had had a wife and a child——" By this time he had found his large, gold-rimmed spectacles, and perusing the first few lines of the opened letter, he sank back in his chair almost breathless.

"Can this be possible?" mumbled the old veteran, "or am I as Ysabella has so often chidden me, indeed, in my dotage," and to convince himself he read the letter several times over.

There was little more done that day in the office of the alcalde. Such business as was pressing was at once dispatched. The key of the great, old-fashioned safe was turned in its lock and delivered over to his secretary, with a few instructions to act during his absence.

Before the next morning had dawned Don Feliz Mendez had become young again. His easy-going housekeeper could scarcely believe her eyes as she saw the otherwise dignified veteran hurrying about the house in boyish frenzy, singing as a youthful peon sings while he herds

his flocks, bowing and smiling at every turn.

"Valgame Deos!" replied the old domestic, "Don Feliz has regained years of his life in one night! What a miracle! But the Don must not forget his head. There will be time until tomorrow. And Pepe, too, will need time to prepare to go with him," and she busied herself with her work.

"Pepe? Pepe?" replied the old man, straightening up at full length, somewhat astonished at the remark of the old woman as she ventured a word in behalf of her procrastinating husband. "Let Pepe not detain me one moment. Pronto! Ysabella! Quick!" and soon the anxious father, accompanied by the faithful Pepe, was on his way to Nogales.

CHAPTER XVII.

EL RENDIR.*

"Everywhere the human soul stands between a hemisphere of light and another of darkness."

CLAD in the plain blue and white of her nurse garb, Felicita seemed all too slight and frail for the work she had undertaken; an appearance intensified by a delicacy of feature and a sweet simplicity of nature all her own among the rough surroundings of a military garrison.

She had not been long in making herself ready for her visit to the sick.

"You have been a long while, Mananka," were the first words that greeted her in a feeble, hollow voice, yet cheerful and hopeful, as Joel came to perfect consciousness.

"Joel!" It was the only word she could utter as she grasped the outstretched hand and smoothed the heavy locks on his high forehead.

Joel feebly smiled at the fickleness of fortune in placing so much enthusiasm in such a fever-

* The Surrender.

worn body as his as he sank upon his heap of pillows, conscious of his weakness.

"Put the chair close up, Mananka. I'm not strong enough yet to speak loud."

"You must not speak at all now," she replied, in a professional way; "when you are well again, Joel, you can tell me all, all that you have to tell."

This silenced him for a while, and he lay gazing at her without a word. Then finally, out of exhaustion, he fell into a long, deep sleep. When he again awoke Felicity was watching over him at the head of the bed.

"Mananka," he half whispered, "have you heard from mother?"

"Yes, Joel," replied the little nurse; "she thinks she will be herself again in a few weeks. She will get better quickly, and then we will have her with us here,—until you are entirely well, at least."

"And how about you, Mananka?" he queried, looking up at her steadfastly.

"Well, Joel, I have been very happy since I am doing what God meant for me to do." And then, after a pause, "You know that I have asked God each night that he might be kind to you."

"Mananka," he replied thoughtfully, "I, I am not worth your sacrifice." He little realized that within his own breast there was a soul as true as her own. "I am sorry, Mananka,

that my rashness has broken into your work and your happiness."

All unconsciously he had touched the keynote to her emotion.

"Oh, Joel, do not say that now. Within a few days I shall be at my work again, and shall be the same harum-scarum you used to know."

"Mananka," he asked, "how long has it been since you went away?"

"Only a few months," she laughed. "Only a few months, Joel!"

"Oh, it seems almost years since I bade you good-bye at the train; yet I knew it could not be for always. A person's heart does not measure time by the clock, does it, child?"

"No, Joel; but I am deceiving the doctor. You must rest a while now," she said, softly, and a faint alarm, causing her to suspect a return of fever, and he smiled feebly, as he realized her fear.

"No, no, Mananka, the doctor cannot cure this fever. No, no, don't go. I have something more to tell you."

But she enforced the rules of her profession and left him nothing more to talk to than the bare walls.

The next morning as she entered the room she found him so far convalescent that he was humming a tune, quite familiar to her, to himself.

He caught her hand as she attempted to

smooth his pillow, and he bade her be seated near him.

"Mananka," he began, "do you remember that evening, long ago, when you stood in the flickering fire-light telling me you were going out of my life? No, you need not answer, dear." Oh, what need was there for her to answer, when he had those speaking eyes before him! "I can see you yet," he continued, musingly, "the warm light rippling over those features so dear to me, in whose calm, sweet loveliness was pictured so much love and gratitude. No, don't try to speak or go away. I shall hold you this time," he said, teasingly. "This is only Joel," and he added, "I knew then that you were more to me than all the world besides, but now, now I know how much more than that you are, and, please God, you will never go out of my life again, Mananka. You seemed to have wanted to go. Had I known then what I do now I would have held this little hand so closely that it never could have slipped away. No, Mananka, it was no one's fault. I love you both the more for what you have suffered for my sake. Dear old mother!" he mused; "God has made no holier thing than a woman's love. There came a time when I could scarcely endure your absence, Mananka. 'Home?' Oh, child, I had no home. The Post called me, and I was only too willing to go. There were long, weary days after that, but there was a day that

brought me happiness. That was the day I was sent down here. I believe I would have come anyway, Mananka, but you know my pride. It has so often stood in the way. And after I got here came that letter from Louise. That made things stand so differently between mother and me, Mananka. Now I want you to read that letter, Mananka. It's under my pillow here. Can you find it?"

Joel's face lit up with hope as he watched her open and read it.

Mananka read it over and over, from the first word to the last, then folded it up tenderly, as if it had contained the very soul of life, and mechanically placed it under the pillow again. Then all the why and the whence and the whither of life seemed to unfold itself to her. Life was no more like the great expanse she had a few months gazed upon through the open window. It was now for some reason, beginning to be a definite something; and then in the midst of all this happiness came the blighting thought of her humble Indian birth, and that thought cast a shadow over the features which a moment before were so bright with happiness.

Joel observed the change, and hoped to avert its effect.

"Mananka?" he remarked, questioningly, but a rap at the door called her from his bedside.

CHAPTER XVII.

LA NOVIA.*

*"Behold while she before the altar stands,
Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
'And blesseth her with his two happy hands,
How the red roses flush up in her cheeks,
'And the pure snow, with goodly vermill stayne
Like crimson dyde in grayne."*

AND it all came about in this way. On the day that Major Wilson left Nogales for Fort Grant, Padre Benito Mendez, a mission priest of the Mission of Magdalena, in Sonora, whose parishioners had suffered much wrong at the hands of these renegades and Indians from across the border of Arizona, hastened to Nogales to file his complaint with the American authorities. On arriving there he was informed of the commission of Major Wilson, and being hard pressed for time, and greatly desirous of having the matter brought before the proper tribunal, immediately repaired with

* The Bride,

several of his servants to the Post. Upon his arrival at the garrison he met with a surprise, for being told there of the misfortune that had befallen the young major, he was denied access to the sick room. Unwilling to be foiled in his purpose, the kindly old priest asked to speak to the sick man's nurse, hoping thereby to effect an early interview with the major. When the lithe form of the garrison nurse made her appearance, neatly clad in its simple uniform, the old padre could scarcely believe his eyes as he saw standing before him on the broad portico of the shackelty old building, so beautifully silhouetted in the twilight sun of an Arizona summer, the very image of his sister-in-law, Palladita.

"Felicita mia," he half whispered, half cried, in his amazement, as the young woman bowed in token of respect and reverence.

"Pardon me, Señorita," he continued, in his quiet, gentle manner, "for a moment I fancied I saw before me, grown to womanhood, my beloved niece."

And then, told in the sweet, welcome accents of her mother tongue, a knowledge of which she had carefully preserved in her studies, Felicita heard for the first time in her life, the strange story of her birth and her babyhood. As the messenger of her fate concluded, she arrested any change from the subject by putting forth a small, suntanned hand that she had but

a moment before taken from the fevered grasp of her guardian and her beloved.

"And, Padre," she said, sobbingly, "perhaps I am this Felicita—this little orphan. And if I am indeed this child, will you tell me where is my father, that I again may be truly 'Felicita,' the little happy one? Perhaps, Padre, he who lies within, wounded and sick, and perhaps——"

At first a delicate blush stole over her soft, brown cheeks; then her eyes, responding to a thousand emotions, filled with tears, until, all unstrung, her resisting nature gave way to sobs. Gently the aged priest laid his hands upon her head, and turning her gaze into his as he did so, he told her in his fatherly way:

"Felicita, you are none other. None but my Palladita ever had those eyes."

There was something in the countenance of the kindly old minister that gave her confidence; there was something in that assurance that thrilled her with the feeling that God had commissioned him for the one purpose to complete her happiness. Resisting no longer, the brave little nurse rested her head upon the grizzly old priest's broad chest and wept; wept she knew not what for, lest it was because of the consummation of life's hopes. That reader alone can tell who at some time in his life has had heaven burst upon him unexpectedly, at one bound, banishing with its warm, cheering

sunlight, and all its splendor and beauty the darkness of a mysterious past.

Early that next morning the story was whispered from man to man. The old Indian woman who had told her queer tale to Felicita was summoned, and she was made to repeat over and over all she knew of the story. Then when the news was brought to Beamer's ears he was ready, with as much additional evidence as was necessary, to prove the fact.

Not many days thereafter a happy message sped from the grey old mission of Nogales to the far western city of Hermocillo. It brought to Don Feliz Mendez the happy tidings of a daughter found. Sent from one brother to another, from priest to alcalde, from daughter to father, it read as follows:

"MY BELOVED BROTHER:—As at the words of the Angel of God the cruel chains fell from the feet of St. Peter, and he was immediately restored to his liberty, so by our constant prayers and sacrifices your long-lost and loving daughter, my niece, your own Felicita, has been restored to us. Brother, rejoice with me. Much joyed at hearing these happy tidings, admit yourself in prayer to the embrace of the Living God, and then prepare to come to meet us. There is more in store for you when you arrive. So commending you, dear brother, to the protection of the Saints, and to the mercy

of God, and to the patronage of the Blessed Virgin, I am ever, believe me, your affectionate brother,
BENITO."

This was accompanied by a note saying :

"MY BELOVED FATHER:—God in his benevolence has granted that we shall meet again after so many years of hopelessness. From hour to hour I await anxiously your arrival that I may receive your paternal blessing, for myself and for him whom I have ever loved. Anxiously and lovingly,
"Your own FELICITA."

When Mananka returned to Joel she told him of all her happiness, of the story of the old Indian woman, of the priest, and of her father. There was no need now for an answer to his query. A moment later found her kneeling in silent prayer at his bedside, her clasped hands resting on his heaving chest, and their prayers were mingled in a solemn thanksgiving to their God.

The physician was no longer required to visit the wounded soldier.

Some few days after the bells of St. Xavier's, the Jesuit Mission of Tucson, sent forth glad tidings as the benediction was said over the heads of the bride and bridegroom by Padre Benito. A kindly mother wept tears of joy

as she beheld before her, united for life, the two of all the world that she loved best.

"Felicita," offered the alcalde, "thou hast made me young again. It is to me as though I have found my Palladita, and as if this is *our* wedding day. May God ever bless thee and thine."

*"A moment later hands unseen
Were hanging the night around them fast,
But she knew a bar was broken between
Life and life; they were mixed at last
In spite of the mortal screen."*

CHAPTER XIX.

LA HACIENDA.*

"Home—the nursery of the infinite."

PANORAMAED by high mountains that are covered with scrub pines and made purple by the evening sun of Arizona, the great rancho of Major Joel Wilson reminds you of a Roman villa, a Southern plantation, or an English estate, save that in dominion it exceeds them all. As you drive through the still atmosphere the serenity of which is broken by the bleating of sheep or the shrill notes of a mocking bird, you will become conscious of the setting sun, for a soft breeze, no more fearful of the fervent heat, dares to wave the top of some lone bush near by. Here and there are bees that drink their last, and as though angered at being belated, buzz and fly homeward. The shades of the tall bushes are beginning to steal over the narrow, dusty roads, and the barren mountains rapidly, yet quietly, clothe the east in darkness.

* The Plantation.

Shadows stretch like great long projecting arms, as though nightly bidden by the God of nature to enfold within their bosom all the little valley, with its many happy souls, as it nestles down closely and more close in the lap of the brown, barren hills.

On your way to the "Casa Alegre," the "Home of Joy," of the Wilsons, you will drive through large grain fields, golden in their harvests, through lanes of lime trees, and by orchards of orange and lemon, stately and verdant in their pride, vast vineyards where the ripe grapes hang in clusters sweet and juicy. Perhaps on your way you will encounter old Felipe, said to be the oldest Indian in Arizona. When you pass him he will touch his hand to his tall sombrero in the way of a salute. To remove it were impossible, as it is fastened with a heavy cord under his wrinkled chin. Then you will pass a long row of adobe huts, where dwell the Indians, the special charge of the Doña Felicita, as Mrs. Joel Wilson is called among the people. You will notice their prosperity, and with what peaceable contentment they are preparing for the approaching night. As you pass these dwellings little Indian children, neatly dressed, will address you in the Mexican tongue with a "Buenos Tardes, Señor." They are the children of the Government Indian school, established at the rancho by the influence of the Major. As you ap-

proach the house you will observe, sitting on the wide porticoes in evening twilight, comfortably resting in a great arm chair, an old lady, whose kindly eyes and hospitable Southern manners seem to bid you enter, even though you have not yet stated your mission. Once introduced, you are a welcome visitor. An Indian servant attends to your horses, an Indian maid will show you to your quarters. When the mistress enters you will be heartily greeted, and if you are conversant in Spanish you will be introduced to a proud old Don, just up from Hermocillo on a visit. He will address you in the most honorific terms, extending to you every courtesy and favor. But your interesting chat to-day with Don Feliz Mendez must needs be interrupted, for Padre Benito has just arrived from Magdalena, and Padre Benito always takes precedence. In the geniality and the good nature of the old priest you are scarcely conscious of that restraint so often felt in the presence of the clergy. You have not yet met the Major. He has been away to attend a sitting of the Territorial Legislature, but is expected back any moment. You have indeed not had long to wait, for at this instant a maid has announced his arrival. A thousand times you are made welcome to the "Casa Alegre." Joel Wilson has not forgotten you. He is the last in the world to forget an old friend, much less an old college mate. But you cannot yet claim

his undivided attention. That attention is almost entirely directed to the dear little wife in his arms, in whose eyes shines the glory of a blissful contentment, happiness and pride. And well may she be proud, for the Major's endeavors to gain statehood for Arizona have been recognized, and his grateful constituents have but now elected him as delegate to the National Congress. There is another to whom preference is shown. It is the kind old mother, who, with moist eye and smile on her lips, stands before him supported on a crutch. You would be hard-hearted indeed to restrain a tear as he raises that snowy white head towards his own and impresses a kiss on that wrinkled brow, where dwell two eyes whose look speaks of love for her son that death alone can quench. Nay, not even death, for in the Other World, too, he will receive those kind caresses by virtue of the Fifth Commandment that he has so carefully obeyed.

When the morning again awakens you may go with your hostess and the good old padre among their charges in the little Indian village close by, there to administer with them to those that need help, and to comfort those that need comfort. You will, indeed, be moved by the love and affection these poor denizens of the desert show the Doña and their confessor. And here among them, as their "chiefo," their leader, stands Pepe, the Indian playfellow of

the child Mananka, grown brave and strong, and beloved by his people.

Little children lovingly cling to the skirts of the señora.

Old men and old women reverently nod their heads, hopeful of the priest's blessings. Then you may turn and ask yourself: "Where among these is the spirit of Natchez, of Geronimo, of Mescalero? Certainly here it has not been overcome by the sword and bayonet." The faces of these children of nature call to your mind the hand and the heart that has made them happy. In one accord they seem to tell you, "we worship with you one God, the great God, Love."

At your departure you will remember the words of the kind old padre: "There is a God in heaven who sees further into the future than unhappy man." And His name will be the last word on the tongue of Felicita, the Little Happy One, as she bids you a fond "Adios."*

*God keep you.

THE END.

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